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THE SON OF MAN COMING IN HIS KINGDOM

ALFRED GANDIER, D.D., LL.D.

THE SON OF MAN COMING IN HIS KINGDOM

A STUDY OF THE APOCALYPTIC ELEMENT IN THE TEACHING OF JESUS

BY

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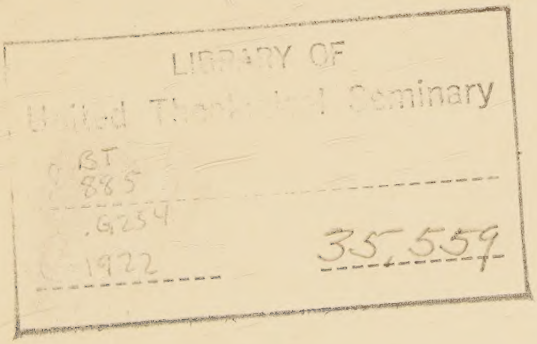
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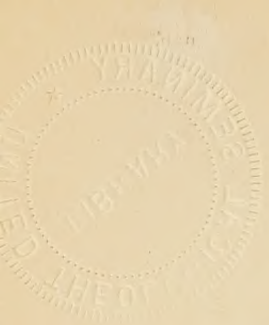

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THE SON OF MAN
COMING IN HIS KINGDOM. II

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INTRODUCTION

The aim of this volume is to present a first-hand study of the Apocalyptic element in the teaching of Jesus such as any intelligent student of the Bible can follow. It has not been written as a contribution to New Testament Scholarship, but is an attempt so to present the results of sane and believing scholarship as to meet the need of busy pastors and earnest-minded Christians who so often are perplexed by the heated controversies over pre-millennial and post-millennial theories of the Second Coming of Christ; and who, after reading elaborate arguments with endless proof texts, find it more difficult than ever to know what the truth really is.

Insistent literalists present to their hearers and readers visions of the future, crude and fantastic as those of the original Jewish Apocalypses, and are not slow to assert that this is the word of God which men disbelieve at their peril. It is seldom that expounders of prophecy agree in detail, but all men of this school agree in believing that a definite programme of the future is set forth in the Scriptures, and that a spectacular, objective, bodily coming again of the Lord Jesus is to take place before the Millennium, during which period

He will reign in person upon the earth. On the other hand, many present-day pastors and teachers, feeling within themselves a revolt from any such conception of the Kingdom of God and the manner of its coming, and finding the New Testament teaching on this subject to be somewhat confusing, leave the whole matter severely alone; with the result that multitudes of good people are left a prey to Mormons, Russellites, Millennial-dawnists, and all the varied types of Adventists who are sure they have discovered God's plan of the ages and can prove it from the Bible.

If leaders and teachers in the organised Church ignore the Apocalyptic element in the New Testament two results are likely to follow. One type of people will be led astray into those views of the Kingdom of God from which Jesus laboured to deliver His disciples all through His earthly ministry; while another class of people, dominated by the modern spirit of which the characteristic words are "development" and "progress," will turn away from Jesus disappointed as from one who shared the mistaken notions of his time and is without a message for the present day.

The aim of this book is not controversial. There is no attempt to prove any theory, post-millennial or pre-millennial, but to discover by an inductive study of the Gospels what Jesus Himself thought and taught with reference to His Coming and Kingdom. The teaching of Jesus must be the norm or standard by reference to which we in-

terpret the Apocalyptic element in all those writings of the Apostolic Age which have been brought together in the New Testament and constitute the authoritative Scriptures of the Church.

Some of the surprises that await one who studies the Gospels in the light of present-day millennial controversies are that Jesus does not once used the word Millennium or make any reference to what is usually connoted by the term, and that while He speaks of the Son of Man coming in his kingdom, and coming in the clouds of heaven, He does not refer to any coming of the Son of Man as "the Second Coming"—an indication surely that the emphasis has been put in the wrong place and that it is time to halt our heated controversies, and in all humility seek to discover what Jesus really did teach.

This, however, may not be so easy as it seems. Granted that in the Gospels we have the very words that Jesus spoke, and that they give us sufficient data to form a judgment of His teaching as a whole, we have still to ask: What was the thought in His mind which He thus sought to express, and what would the significance of these words be to the men and women to whom He spoke?

For an intelligent understanding of the words of the Lord Jesus it is necessary to have some knowledge of (1) the Old Testament preparation for Christ, (2) the trend of religious thought in the centuries which intervened, (3) the attitude

of mind in those to whom He spoke, and (4) the religious vocabulary of His time.

Christians have always recognised that the mind of Christ was saturated with the noblest teachings of the Old Testament and that its language formed a natural medium for the expression of His own thought. But only in recent years has there been discovered that series of Jewish Apocalypses (of which Daniel is the fore-runner) which were written in the centuries immediately preceding the Coming of Christ, and which had no small influence in shaping the religious thought and imagery of the Jewish people in our Lord's time. Some knowledge of this literature no less than of the Old Testament is essential if we are to interpret aright the teaching of Jesus, because it is now evident beyond a doubt that Jewish Apocalypse largely influenced the language and thought forms of the New Testament. Jesus did not live in a vacuum, and to understand His life and Mission we must know something of the religious, moral and intellectual atmosphere in which He lived and moved and had His earthly being—and of this Jewish Apocalypse furnished no small part. The writer makes no pretence of first-hand knowledge of this literature, but he thinks it worth while to pass on to the reader from the learned translations and commentaries of that indefatigable scholar, R. H. Charles, sufficient to form an intelligible background for the life and teachings of Jesus.

The late Professor Sanday was right when he insisted that in any honest study of the words of Jesus one must keep in mind two things: (1) the extent to which he accepts and uses language and symbolism which He found already in existence as an expression of the common stock of religious ideas and hopes of those among whom he lived; and (2) the extent to which in the very act of accepting and adapting to His own purpose this language and this symbolism He filled them with a deeper and richer content.

That Jesus did fill the language and symbolism of His time with a deeper and richer spiritual content has been set forth most convincingly by my colleague, Professor William Manson in his book, "Christ's View of the Kingdom." To this book I am much indebted, and also to such books as "The Life of Christ in Recent Research," Sanday; "The Eschatological Question in the Gospels," Emmet; "The Kingdom and the Messiah," Ernest F. Scott; "Christ's Message of the Kingdom," A. G. Hogg.

The first chapters may appear somewhat forbidding to the average reader, but they are necessary to any intelligent study of the subject and prepare for the later chapters where the interest centres. Occasionally long passages of Scripture are quoted in full because they are necessary to the understanding of what Jesus taught and it is thus made possible for them to be read even should the reader not have a Bible at hand.

This little volume might have been much lengthened out had the writer yielded to the temptation to discuss cognate themes or to take up the whole larger question of New Testament Eschatology, or to discuss modern Millenarian views in the light of their history. But all this has been resolutely resisted because of the conviction that what is most needed to-day is a brief yet adequate study of what Jesus himself taught with reference to His coming and kingdom.

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Chapter I

PROPHECY AND APOCALYPSE

There had been dark days in the history of God's ancient people. The Jews at their best were a feeble folk compared with neighbouring nations. Palestine was the little Belgium of that earlier time—frequently trodden underfoot by the armies of mighty empires on either side. Over and over again the enemies of Israel swooped down upon that devoted land, destroying harvests, sacking or burning cities, slaughtering the young men and carrying off maidens to a fate that was worse than death. These experiences culminated in what is spoken of as the Assyrian and Babylonian captivity when the whole land was overrun, the capital cities of Samaria and Jerusalem destroyed, and all the better classes of the people carried captive into the lands of the Tigris and the Euphrates. Even after the return from exile and the rebuilding of Jerusalem and the temple, the little colony of Jews were under Persian and Syrian overlords and did not attain to full national freedom.

Antiochus Epiphanes, a cruel and brutal tyrant, set himself to stamp out the Jewish religion and thus break forever the independent spirit of the people. By his orders the temple was desecrated and stripped of its treasures. Upon the great altar sacrifice was offered to Jupiter Olympus—"the abomination that maketh desolate" referred to in the book of Daniel. The Jews were forbidden to circumcise their children, read their sacred Scriptures, or perform the rites of their religion. Those who persisted saw their children tortured and slain before their eyes and themselves suffered martyrdom or were driven to the mountains and the deserts. It was of this period the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews was thinking when he wrote—"And others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection:

"And others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment:

"They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented;

"(Of whom the world was not worthy:) they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth." (Hebrews 11:35-38.)

We wonder not therefore that many a time in Israel's history there arose the question that still

rises from the stricken and tortured—WHY? "If we are Jehovah's people, and Jehovah is a righteous God and an Almighty God, as the prophets have taught us to believe,—why does He permit this? Why does He allow Gentiles who worship other gods and live in abominable idolatry and immorality to lord it over us?" The usual answer given by the prophets to this question was, "Jehovah is punishing you for your disobedience to His law, even as He said He would do by the mouth of His servant Moses long ago. Repent of your sin, turn from your idolatry, put away injustice and oppression from among yourselves, and Jehovah will repent of the evil He has allowed to come upon you, will once more give you victory over your enemies and restore prosperity to your land." A fine sample of this prophetic message is given in the first chapter of Isaiah, verses 16-20.

"Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil;

"Learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow.

"Come now and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.

"If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land:

"But if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be de-

voured with the sword; for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it."

But there came a time when many of the best people did not feel this answer to be adequate. They knew that they had sinned and deserved to be punished but they also knew that the whole nation even at its worst was purer, truer, more righteous and more merciful than the best of the nations who crushed and tortured them. Moreover in the later persecutions it was the righteous —those who would obey Jehovah's law and be true to their holy religion at all costs, who were spoiled of their goods and put to death or driven to the mountains and the desert; while breakers of the law and apostates from the faith waxed rich and were exalted to positions of influence and honour.

And so from the later prophets another answer came: "Jehovah permits this only for a season. In these afflictions Jehovah does more than punish the guilty; He disciplines the righteous; He purges the nation, and prepares it to be His servant and share His glory in the better age that is soon to come." They pictured a great Day of the Lord when Jehovah would make bare His mighty arm, destroy their enemies round about on every side, establish His Anointed upon David's throne and usher in a reign of righteousness and peace over all the earth. In this new era nature itself would come anew under the subtle spell of Jehovah's rule; the land would yield its increase with unfail-

ing regularity; the desert would become as a garden; no longer would the earth breed poisonous reptiles; thorns and thistles would cease to grow; the lamb and the lion would lie down together; and they would no more hurt or destroy in all God's holy mountain.

The message of the prophet differed according to time, place and circumstance, but all were alike in this that even in the darkest days, when national righteousness was at its lowest or the fortunes of the nation at their worst, they believed in the final triumph of righteousness, and pictured this triumph in the form of a glorified and universalised Judaism.

The pre-exilic prophets speaking in times of national prosperity, foretold a day of judgment to come upon Israel at the hands of some foreign power because of their excesses and immoralities, their pride and forgetfulness of God. But even those prophets who most emphatically declared that the Jewish state would be overthrown and the people carried into exile, predicted a return from exile, and exhausted all their wealth of Oriental imagery in describing a re-united Israel, dwelling again in the land of promise redeemed from barrenness to more than its former fruitfulness, and in that land attaining to power and world-wide glory under David their King.

The prophets of exile maintained the faith and hope of the people by teaching them to conceive of the exile not as a failure of Israel's promised

destiny but as (1) the just judgment of God upon their sin and (2) the necessary discipline and purification by which a remnant at least would be fitted for the glory of the coming time. Israel has now "received at the Lord's hands double for all her sins" (Isaiah 40: 2-7) and may look to the future with an assured hope.

The years which followed the return did not, however, fulfil the predictions, and other prophets arose to justify the ways of God to men. Now as in the past it was the sin of the people which delayed the promised blessing. Haggai and Zechariah reproved their lack of zeal in building the new temple. Malachi denounced the hypocrisy of a people who professed loyalty and yet robbed Jehovah of tithes and offerings. But they still had faith in Israel's future, and declared that the glory of this pitiable little second temple would be greater than that of the former, and that Jehovah Himself would visit His temple.

But the years went by and the predictions were not fulfilled. This second temple was profaned, Jerusalem again trodden under foot of Gentiles, and the keeping of the law made a crime punishable with death. The righteous perished from the land; only the wicked could rise to prosperity and power.

Amid such conditions the prophetic teaching took on a new form, and a new type of religious literature emerged in which was continued the attempt of the prophets to justify the ways of God

to men. This is called "*Apocalypse*" from the Greek word which means an "unveiling."

Notwithstanding the wickedness of his time which he sternly rebuked and the ills which had befallen the chosen race, the prophet still believed that this was a moral world, and that in this world the righteousness and goodness of God would yet be vindicated. He had faith in the nation's destiny and therefore called men to repentance, suggested reforms, and pictured a better future growing out of the present in response to the changed heart of the people. But the Apocalyptic writer sees the nation prostrate, the righteous special objects of hatred, and obedience to the law, which should have brought deliverance, only precipitating disaster. His political hopes are dead. No King sitting on David's throne can restore the nation or bring back Paradise to earth. This world order is under the power of demons and incurably bad. For the man who views life seriously light can come only from the unveiling (Apocalypse) of the hidden and super-mundane world of the future. The Apocalyptist is one who claims to have had visions of this hidden world in which have been disclosed to him the secret purpose of God. In that purpose fallen angels and demons and Gentile nations have their rôle to play, but they are the objects of God's wrath to be destroyed one after another until finally all power will be placed in the hands of the people of the Most High. This, however, is not to be ac-

complished by might of men or even by the moral forces at work in human history. God will do this by an act of supernatural power at the predestined moment, and for it the righteous must wait in faith and patience.

"Only an act of God, comparable to the first creation of the world, could release society from its incurable defects, and set it on the right way again. Thus, while the ordinary Jew went on believing in an emancipated Israel under a warrior Son of David, elect spirits turned their thoughts to the hope, now risen above the horizon, of a new creation, mediated by the Divine judgment, and realising at one stroke all the conditions of a renewed and regenerate life on earth. The Danielic idea of the Kingdom of God, from which the later eschatology starts, is that of a Kingdom which comes down out of Heaven, and supersedes entirely the kingdoms of this world." [1]

The conflict between promise and fulfilment was felt both in the experience of the righteous as a community and the experience of the righteous as individuals. Apocalyptic literature, therefore, strove to show that the righteous individual no less than the nation would be vindicated in the consummation of all things. Though in the meantime the righteous individual may perish amid the world's disorders, he will not fail to attain through the resurrection the recompense that is due either in the messianic kingdom or in Heaven

[1] "The Kingdom and the Messiah," Ernest F. Scott.

itself. It is at this point in the development of Jewish religious thought that the doctrine of the resurrection becomes prominent, though the duration and character of the resurrection life vary with the different writers. The future "unveiled" in these Apocalyptic writings presented this general scheme: (1) A coming day of judgment which is near at hand and breaks upon the world when evil is at its height. (2) The overthrow of the world powers. (3) The sifting of the Jewish people. (4) The resurrection of the righteous dead. (5) Kingship over the nations and age-long blessedness for the righteous Jews.

Chapter II

THE JEWISH APOCALYPTIC WRITINGS

As to literary form, Apocalyptic writings were largely made up of grotesque, mysterious, unnatural and even monstrous figures, seen in dreams and visions, interpreted by angels, and purporting to unveil the future course of history and the things of the unseen world. In Ezekiel one notes the beginnings of this transition in style from the earlier prophets to the later Apocalyptists. The earlier prophets were primarily speakers, and if afterwards they wrote it was, as they spoke, with the consciousness of a message direct from God to the people. "Thus saith the Lord" was their bold claim to authority. Unlike the prophet, the Apocalyptist did not conceive of himself as coming with a new message from God all his own. "He was a serious student of the ancient prophecies, cherished traditions, and symbolic figures of his race, whose secrets he felt himself called upon to expound as they had been revealed to him in visions from God."[1] Lacking the prophet's sense of personal authority, he seldom gave his own name, but connected some

[1] R. H. Charles.

authoritative name of the past—Enoch, Noah, Moses, Solomon, Isaiah, Baruch, Daniel, etc., with his visions of God's purpose for Israel in this world and for the righteous in the world to come.

Another reason for the association of ancient and authoritative names with these writings was, that by the second century before Christ the Jewish Canon of scripture was practically closed and inspiration regarded as a thing of the past. When this view became general no man, however keenly he felt himself to be the bearer of a divine message to his countrymen, could expect a hearing except in so far as his message was regarded as an unfolding of revelations given in the distant past to undoubted prophets.

Daniel

The Book of Daniel is the first and finest bit of Jewish Apocalypse. Chapter VII may be regarded as the germ and norm of all that is best in Jewish Apocalypse. After the vision of the four great beasts, Daniel says,

"I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool: his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire.

"A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him; thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood

before him; the judgment was set, and the books were opened.

"I beheld then because of the voice of the great words which the horn spake: I beheld even till the beast was slain, and his body destroyed, and given to the burning flame.

"As concerning the rest of the beasts, they had their dominion taken away; yet their lives were prolonged for a season and time.

"I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like unto a Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him.

"And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that shall not be destroyed." (Daniel 7: 9-14.)

It is doubtful if there is any reference here to a personal Messiah. "One like unto a Son of man" is a symbolic figure representing the saints of the most High, as the different beasts had represented the successive world powers. In the interpretation of the vision no reference is made to "one like unto a Son of man," but only to the saints whom this symbolic figure represents.

"But the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end.

"And the kingdom and dominion, and the great-

ness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey Him." (Daniel 7:26, 27.)

It is the most High who overthrows the hostile powers. The Kingdom is His and He bestows it upon the saints. The hope of deliverance through a King of David's line has receded into the background, and the suffering saints look for the intervention of God Himself.

Enoch

Next in importance to Daniel, and without doubt exercising a very great influence upon New Testament thought and language is what may be called the "Enoch Literature." In Genesis 5:24, it is said of Enoch that "he walked with God." This was taken to mean that he enjoyed superhuman privileges, by reason of which he received special revelations as to the origin of evil, the relation of men and angels in the past, their future destinies, and particularly the ultimate triumph of righteousness. It was not unnatural, therefore, that Apocalyptic literature should begin to circulate under his name in the centuries when such literature became current. In the book of Enoch translated from the Ethiopic, and the book of the Secrets of Enoch translated from the Slavonic, we have large fragments of such a litera-

ture. Dr. Charles, the great authority on Apocalyptic Literature, traces what we find in the Ethiopic Book of Enoch to the second and first centuries B. C. and believes that it was originally written in Hebrew, then translated into Greek, and afterwards into Ethiopic and Latin. He says, "Nearly all the writers of the New Testament were familiar with it, and were more or less influenced by it in thought and diction. It is quoted as a genuine production of Enoch by Jude, and as Scripture by Barnabas. The authors of the book of Jubilees, the Apocalypse of Baruch, and 4 Ezra laid it under contribution. With the earlier Fathers and Apologists it had all the weight of a canonical book."

But the book contained much of a questionable character, and from the fourth century A. D. onward fell into discredit. Under the ban of such authorities as Jerome and Augustine it gradually passed out of circulation and became lost to the knowledge of Western Christendom until about a century ago when an Ethiopic version was found in Abyssinia. Whoever the final author may have been the work is evidently composite and comes from different writers in different periods. The Book of Enoch is of supreme value to the student of the New Testament because it so largely contains the historical memorials of the religious development of Judaism during the two centuries preceding Christ, and particularly the development of that higher theology of Judaism from

which historically Christianity took its rise. How far this literature was known and read in the time of our Lord we can not tell, but any one who reads that chapter in Charles's Introduction to the Book of Enoch, in which passages from Enoch are placed over against passages from the New Testament on the same page, can not help seeing how frequently phrases from Enoch appear in the New Testament without reference to their source, thus showing that this literature equally with the canonical literature of the Old Testament had moulded the religious thought and coloured the religious language of the time.

We therefore make no excuse for pausing to give a brief outline of the general content of the main sections of this book.

Book of Enoch. First Section (Chapters I-XXXVI)

This is probably the oldest section of the book and belongs to the early part of the second century, B. C., the time when the orthodox Jews were most hopelessly at the mercy of their enemies, and no semblance of national life was left. In such circumstances, it was no easy task to justify the ways of God to men, but the author essays it. The righteous will not always suffer, nor will the wicked always prosper. The limits thereto are set by death and the great world judgments (Ch.

1:1). Original sin is not traced to Adam, but to the fallen Watchers who lusted after the daughters of men (Ch. IX:6-10; chapter X:8). Hence the Watchers are visited with judgment, cast into the abyss, chained, reserved for eternal fire; while their children, the giants, who have oppressed the earth, are stirred up to destroy each other. The flood is the completion of the first world judgment. But though only the righteous survive the flood, sin persists and again pervades the earth through the demons, i. e., the spirits who went forth from the slaughtered giants and who haunt the earth until the time of the final judgment.

This second and last judgment will take place on Mt. Sinai (Chapter I:4) and will be preceded by a general resurrection of Israel. The watchers, the demons, and the godless will then receive their final award and be led off to the abyss of fire (Chapter X:12; XVI:1). The earth being cleansed from wickedness, the Messianic Kingdom will be established with Jerusalem as its centre (Chapter XXV:3). All the surviving Gentiles will become righteous and worship God (Chapter X:21). The righteous will eat of the tree of life (Chapter XXV:4-6), and thereby live a long life on earth, begetting thousands of children, and enjoying unlimited material blessings (Chapter X:17).

Notice that in this section of the book there is no reference to a Messiah and no hint as to

what becomes of the righteous after this long life of earthly blessedness. The interest is in the earthly consummation of the destiny of Israel as a community, and goes little beyond the hope of the earlier prophets.

Taking the sections of the book in what seems to be the order of their appearance, we next consider:—

Book of Enoch, Fourth Section (Chapters LXXXIII-XC)

Here we have much the same problem and much the same solution, only that this seems to be written from the viewpoint of the Maccabean period. There is the same reference to the deluge as the first world judgment, but the interest centres chiefly in the calamities that have befallen Israel since the exile. Why has Israel been made the servant of one Gentile power after another? For their sin. But the seventy shepherds (apparently angels) into whose care God has committed Israel have permitted more severity and more slaughter than God intended, and an account has been kept and God will recompense (Chapter XC: 33). There is a highly figurative passage (Chapter XC: 6-19) which evidently describes the rise of the Maccabees and the deliverance wrought when oppression is at its worst, through the leadership of Judas. The hostile Gentiles will assemble and put forth every effort to destroy him but in vain.

God will appear in person to overthrow the enemies of his sheep. Then will the wicked shepherds and the fallen watchers be judged and cast into the abyss of fire. The new Jerusalem will be set up, the dispersed of Israel gathered into it, and the righteous dead raised (Chapter XC: 33), the surviving Gentiles converted and subjected to Israel (Chapter XC: 30).

So far this writer solves the problem exactly as it is solved in Section 1, but whereas in Section 1 there is no reference to a Messiah of any kind, here, after the second judgment, there is a figurative representation of the appearance of the Messiah in the midst of the new Jerusalem, and of the righteous as gloriously transformed into his likeness. While the writer thinks of God Himself as overthrowing the enemies of Israel, judging the wicked, setting up the new order, and does not feel the need of an earthly Messiah other than a leader like Judas, he does feel the need of some super-human presence, if the life of the new Jerusalem is to realise the hopes of the faithful. He vindicates the righteousness of God by picturing the final scene of human history as a fellowship of the righteous with a perfect One into whose likeness they are transformed. He leaves it at least open to his readers to surmise that this life in the likeness of the Messiah may be eternal.

But this solution with its earthly kingdom and material rewards even when enhanced by the pres-

ence of the Messiah, likeness to him and indefinite continuance, did not meet the deepest longings of the more spiritually minded. With the growing sense of individuality there came the longing for something more than any national future that could be pictured. The spirit of man reached out for a heaven in the spirit world and a life beyond the conditions of time and sense, and so the traditional hope assumed a dual form. Two consummations came to be pictured, (1) the earthly world rule of Israel, vindicating the righteousness of God in the national life, and (2) following that the entrance of the righteous into the new heavens and the new earth—the abode of eternal blessedness. This solution appears first in

Section V of the Book of Enoch (Chapters XCI-CIV)

This section was written very probably about the beginning of the first century B. C. Charles dates it between 104 and 95 B. C., when the hope of Israel's future, built upon the Maccabean successes, had begun to fade away, and there was open breach between Hyrcanus and the Pharisees. Notwithstanding the mighty deeds of the Maccabean period, this writer has lost faith in human deliverers. The new Priest-Kings, under whom Israel enjoyed a quasi-independence, are a sad disappointment to all who have a zeal for God and righteousness. A kingdom that will be finally and

perfectly satisfactory to the righteous and vindicate the moral government of God is not to be looked for on earth, and so this writer follows the earthly world-rule of Israel with a picture of the general judgment, and the entrance of the righteous into the new heavens and new earth which replace the old. The wicked are seemingly sinning with impunity, yet their evil deeds are recorded every day (Chapter CIV:7) and for this they will suffer endless retribution in Sheol. But even on earth at the end of the eighth world week, the righteous shall triumph over the wicked. This reign of the righteous shall persist until the tenth world week and be revealed to the whole world (Chapter XCI: 12-14). Then will ensue the final judgment, with destruction of the former heaven and earth and creation of a new heaven (Chapter XCI:14-16). The righteous dead who have been especially guarded by angels will thereupon be raised as spirits (Chapter CIII:3-4) and the portals of the new heaven shall be open to them and they shall become the companions of the heavenly hosts, "and all shall be in goodness and righteousness and sin shall no more be mentioned for ever" (Chapter XCI: 17).

It is to be noted that this section differs from the preceding not only in presenting a twofold consummation, but in placing the judgment *after* the earthly world rule of Israel, and in making the interest to centre, not in any earthly kingdom of a Messiah, for no Messiah is mentioned, but in

the future spiritual life of the righteous in heaven. This is very much the idea of heaven that is presented in the New Testament, only that the Christian picture includes the personal presence of the Christ and life in His likeness, which is hinted at in Section IV of the Book of Enoch. The Christian vision of heaven includes and transfigures what is best and truest in both these sections of the Book of Enoch.

The Secrets of Enoch

In another book, "The Secrets of Enoch" (Chapter XXXIII), the author, speaking of the Creation, suggests that six days of work followed by a seventh day of rest are at once a history of the past and a forecasting of the future. As the world was made in six days so its history will be accomplished in 6000 years, and as the six days of creation were followed by one of rest, so the 6000 years of the world's history will be followed by a rest of 1000 years, a millennial period, probably identical with the Messianic age. On its close will begin the eighth or eternal day of blessedness, a time when there is "no computation, and no end, neither years, nor months, nor weeks, nor days, nor hours."

Six thousand years of world history followed by a millennial age preceding the ushering in of the eternal order seems to have become almost a commonplace of Apocalyptic thought; and this

conception of the end with its two-fold culmination is taken over, in form at least, into the Apocalypse of St. John; but, as we would expect in the Revelation of John the disciple of Jesus, the millennium which precedes the general resurrection, the final judgment and the ushering in of the new heaven and the new earth, is Christian and not Jewish. Jesus and His martyred saints reign over the earth during this period in which Satan is bound.

"And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon it was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war.

"His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself.

"And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood, and his name is called, The Word of God.

"And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean.

"And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations; and he shall rule them with a rod of iron, and he treadeth the wine press of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.

"And he hath on his vesture, and on his thigh a name written, *King of Kings and Lord of Lords.*

. . . . . .

"And I saw the beast and the kings of the earth,

and their armies gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army.

"And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone.

"And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth: and all the fowls were filled with their flesh." (Revelation 19:11-16; 19-21.)

"And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand.

"And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years.

"And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled; and after that he must be loosed a little season.

"And I saw thrones and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them; and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image,

neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years." (Revelation 20:1-4.)

. . . . . .

"And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison.

"And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea.

"And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city; and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them.

"And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.

"And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them.

"And I saw the dead small and great stand before God; and the books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works." (Rev. 20:7-12.)

"And I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea.

"And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

"And I heard a great voice out of the throne saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.

"And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes, and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away.

"And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new." (Revelation 21:1-5.)

It is worthy of note that the vision of a thousand year period preceding the final judgment, during which Satan is bound, and which has been the starting point for all the millenarian theories and controversies that have vexed the church, ancient and modern, is not original with John, and appears nowhere else in the Old or New Testament.

It is surely a mistake to build dogmas on a literal prosaic interpretation of language that is evidently intended to be symbolic and which has no counterpart elsewhere in Old or New Testament, but only in Jewish Apocalypse.

No doubt the rider on the white horse is Jesus, but that the whole passage is symbolic and the victory a triumph of the Word and Spirit of Jesus is evident from the fact that His name is called

"The Word of God," and that the sharp sword which smiteth the nations goeth "out of His mouth."

Have we any right to deduce more from these chapters of Revelation than that John, after the fashion of Jewish Apocalyptic writers, and in imagery that would appeal to the minds of Jewish Christians, vividly sets before us the two great truths demanded by the heart and conscience of God's suffering saints in every age: (1) That eventually Christ's Kingdom will prevail and His martyred saints be vindicated even in this world history, and (2) that the final blessedness of the redeemed can be nothing less than a higher state of spiritual existence, beyond the limitations and the struggle of this mortal earthly life in a new heaven and a new earth, from which the former things have passed away.

But if we must not press Apocalyptic visions to a literal interpretation, on the other hand we must not underestimate the contribution of Jewish Apocalyptic writings to Christian thought. Christianity transcends the national, is personal and spiritual, and it was Apocalypse which made the transition from the national to the individual hope. The prophet promised a blessed future for the nation, but had no word of hope for the individual souls who passed into the unseen as the generations came and went.

Any clear conviction of a blessed future life sprang not from the Law or the Prophets but from

Apocalypse. Resurrection unto life, of which there is scarcely a hint in the Law or the Prophets, was a genuine inspiration of later Judaism and was accepted by the entire Jewish nation with the exception of the Sadducees.

The Christian conception of a new heaven and a new earth, a regeneration of all things, and along with that the idea of a cataclysmic ending of this present world ushering in a final judgment and an eternal order, comes to us from Apocalypse. Old Testament prophecy looked forward to a Messianic Kingdom on this earth of indefinite duration, but in the Apocalyptic writers this idea underwent a gradual transformation, till the hopes of the righteous were transferred from a kingdom of material blessedness here on earth, to a spiritual, heavenly Kingdom in which they were to be as the angels, and become companions of the heavenly hosts. At its highest point Apocalypse rose to the conception of eternal life for the righteous in a super-earthly heavenly kingdom.

Chapter III

APOCALYPTIC VISIONS AND NATIONAL HOPES

As we have seen in the previous chapter, the fourth and fifth sections of the Book of Enoch are in some respects the high water level of Jewish Apocalypse, and mark the point where it passes over into Christian Apocalypse, and provides the imagery for the Christian outlook upon the future of the Kingdom and its final consummation. Coming from the Old Testament to the three sections of the Book of Enoch we have thus far considered, our greatest surprise is to find that a personal Messiah has no part in the overthrow of evil and the ushering in of the kingdom of righteousness. Only in one of the sections referred to does the Messiah appear at all, and there as a sort of after-thought, when judgment has been effected through the supernatural intervention of God Himself.

In fact Jewish Apocalypse in general places little reliance upon deliverance wrought through any earthly hero. The idea of a glorious King, who builds again the throne of his father David, falls into the background, and where the Messianic conception is given a central place, the person around whom the drama centres is not an earthly

king or military leader but a Being direct from God, whose power and kingdom are of a supernatural character.

The most startling, and for New Testament students the most significant, of all the Apocalyptic writings is the second section of the Book of Enoch to which we may now refer.

The Book of Enoch, Second Section (Chapters XXXVII-LXXI)

This section is known as "The Similitudes of Enoch." Charles dates it between 95 and 65 B. C., the period immediately preceding the appearance of the Romans in Palestine. The Kings and the mighty ones so frequently denounced are evidently the later Maccabean princes and their Sadducean supporters. It probably follows the time when Jannæus had so freely shed the blood of the Pharisees. On the other hand the lack of any reference to Rome as a world power suggests a date before the coming of Pompey in 64 B. C. Following Daniel and the earlier Enoch literature, the writer thinks of Divine intervention as alone adequate, and of a transformed heaven and earth as the only satisfying abode of righteousness.

But while no earthly King or political Messiah can bring in the Kingdom that abides, this writer pictures a Son of Man, not a symbol as in Daniel but a person, who, pre-existing with God, appears at the appointed time to overthrow the kings and

the mighty, judge the quick and the dead, cast the wicked into Gehenna, transform the saints, and dwell among them for ever the source of their life and joy.

The names most frequently used to denote this One whom the Lord of Spirits has anointed are the "Elect One" and "the Son of Man."

"And at that hour that Son of Man was named
In the presence of the Lord of Spirits,
And his name before the Head of Days.

Yea, before the sun and the signs were created,
Before the stars of the heaven were made,
His name was named before the Lord of Spirits.

He shall be a staff to the righteous whereon to stay themselves and not fall,
And he shall be the light of the Gentiles,
And the hope of those who are troubled of heart.

All who dwell on earth shall fall down and worship before him
And will praise and bless and celebrate with song the Lord of Spirits.

And for this reason hath he been chosen and hidden before Him,
Before the creation of the world and for evermore." (Chapter XLVIII: 2-6.)

"And the Lord of Spirits placed the Elect One on the throne of glory.
And he shall judge all the works of the holy above in the heaven,
And in the balance shall their deeds be weighed.

And when he shall lift up his countenance
To judge their secret ways according to the word of the name of the Lord of Spirits,
And their path according to the way of the righteous judgment of the Lord of Spirits,
Then shall they all with one voice speak and bless,
And glorify and extol and sanctify the name of the Lord of Spirits." (Chapter LXI: 8-9.)

"And thus the Lord commanded the kings and the mighty and the exalted, and those who dwell on the earth, and said: 'Open your eyes and lift up your horns if ye are able to recognise the Elect One.'

And the Lord of Spirits seated him on the throne of His glory,
And the spirit of righteousness was poured out upon him,
And the word of his mouth slays all the sinners,
And all the unrighteous are destroyed from before his face.

And there shall stand up in that day all the kings and the mighty,
And the exalted and those who hold the earth,
And they shall see and recognise
How he sits on the throne of his glory,
And righteousness is judged before him,
And no lying word is spoken before him.

Then shall pain come upon them as on a woman in travail,
When her child enters the mouth of the womb,
And she has pain in bringing forth.

And one portion of them shall look on the other,
And they shall be terrified,
And they shall be downcast of countenance.
And pain shall seize them,
When they see that Son of Man
Sitting on the throne of his glory.

And the kings and the mighty and all who possess the earth shall bless and glorify and extol him who rules over all, who was hidden.

For from the beginning the Son of Man was hidden,
And the most High preserved him in the presence of His might,
And revealed him to the elect.

And the congregation of the elect and holy shall be sown,
And all the elect shall stand before him on that day.

And all the kings and the mighty and the exalted and those who rule the earth
Shall fall down before him on their faces,
And worship and set their hope upon that Son of Man,
And petition him and supplicate for mercy at his hands.

Nevertheless that Lord of Spirits will so press them
That they shall hastily go forth from His presence,
And their faces shall be filled with shame,
And the darkness shall grow deeper on their faces.

And He will deliver them to the angels for punishment,
To execute vengeance on them because they have oppressed His children and His elect.

And they shall be a spectacle for the righteous and for His elect:
They shall rejoice over them,
Because the wrath of the Lord of Spirits resteth upon them,
And His sword is drunk with their blood.

And the righteous and elect shall be saved on that day,
And they shall never thenceforward see the face of the sinners and unrighteous.

And the Lord of Spirits will abide over them,
And with that Son of Man shall they eat
And lie down and rise up for ever and ever.

And the righteous and elect shall have risen from the earth,
And ceased to be of downcast countenance.

And they shall have been clothed with garments of glory,
And these shall be the garments of life from the Lord of Spirits;
And your garments shall not grow old,
Nor your glory pass away before the Lord of Spirits." (Chapter LXII: 1-16.)

But we must not imagine that all, even of the Pharisaic party, had ceased to trust in an arm of flesh or had set their affections on things above.

The national spirit was strong, and a mighty hope for the nation's future was ever the dominating passion of the people. The exploits of a beggarly handful of down-trodden Jews under the Maccabean leaders had shown what despised Israel could do when led by men divinely endowed with wisdom and valour. True, the Asmonean line of kings had not realised the ideal of their ancient scriptures. Its days were numbered. Rome, most terrible of all the world powers, was now thundering at the door, but this only turned the Jewish people anew to the Old Testament promise of a Prince of David's line who, supernaturally endowed of God, would execute judgment upon the Gentiles and restore the nation to more than its pristine glory.

The Psalms of Solomon

One of the noblest expressions of this national hope is found in a writing called the "Psalms of Solomon," dating from the years immediately following the invasion of Pompey (B. C. 63). These Psalms picture the Asmoneans as usurpers of David's throne, who are now brought under the power of the Gentiles. The party of sinners and men pleasers (Sadducees) occupy the chief priestly offices. The Holy things are polluted and secret enormities prevail. The party of the sinners is rich and prosperous; the righteous are poor and despised; but Israel is a theocracy and

will yet be seen as such, for God will raise up his Anointed One of David's line to destroy the dominion of the Gentiles, and set up in its place a Kingdom of Israel which he will govern in perfect accordance with the will of God.

Psalm XVII, quoted by Sanday, is a good sample,

"Behold, O Lord, and raise up unto them their king, the Son of David, in the time which thou, O God, knowest, that he may reign over Israel thy servant.

"And gird him with strength that he may break in pieces them that rule unjustly.

"Purge Jerusalem from the heathen that trample her down to destroy her, with wisdom and with righteousness.

"He shall thrust out the sinners from the inheritance, utterly destroy the proud spirit of the sinners, and as potter's vessels with a rod of iron shall he break in pieces all their substances.

"He shall destroy the ungodly nations with the sword of his mouth, so that at his rebuke the nations may flee before him, and he shall convict the sinners in the thoughts of their hearts.

"And he shall gather together a holy people, whom he shall lead in righteousness; and shall judge the tribes of the people that hath been sanctioned by the Lord his God.

"And he shall not suffer iniquity to lodge in their midst; and none that knoweth wickedness shall dwell with them.

"For he shall take knowledge of them, that they be all the sons of their God, and shall divide them upon the earth according to their tribes.

"And the sojourner and the stranger shall dwell with them no more.

"He shall judge the nations and the peoples with the wisdom of his righteousness.

"And he shall possess the nations of the heathen to serve him beneath his yoke; and he shall glorify the Lord in a place to be seen of the whole earth.

"And he shall purge Jerusalem and make it holy, even as it was in the days of old.

"So that the nations may come from the ends of the earth to see his glory, bringing as gifts her sons that had fainted,

"And may see the glory of the Lord, wherewith God hath glorified her.

"And a righteous king and taught of God is he that reigneth over them.

"And there shall be no iniquity in his days in their midst, for all shall be holy and their king is the Lord Messiah." (Pss. Sol. XVII: 23-36.)

In this Psalm, the Messiah is evidently regarded as endowed of God for his task and as conquering with super-earthly powers, but there is no suggestion of pre-existence or supernatural birth. He is a divinely appointed *man,* setting up a Jewish Theocracy as the Kingdom of God on earth.

With the mass of the people, the national hope became less and less religious and more and more

secular. They looked for a political and military leader to bring national deliverance. Philo no doubt describes the prevailing belief when he says, "According to the prophets, a man will appear who wages war and conquers powerful nations, while God sends the needed help to his saints." The existence of the zealots as a party is evidence that, with large sections of the people, the conception of the Messianic deliverance was mainly national and political.

In the New Testament, we find Christ and His disciples moving among a people eagerly, almost feverishly, waiting for the appearance of the promised Deliverer.

The demand which Jesus everywhere found and had to set aside was for a Son of David who would break the yoke of Rome and restore prosperity to the Jewish nation.

"The Assumption of Moses," which Charles believes to have been written between A. D. 7 and A. D. 30, the period of our Lord's life, is collateral evidence to the prevailing national and political character of the Messianic hope at that time. It is evidently the protest of an old-time Pharisee against the growing secularisation of the Pharisaic party through its leavening with earthly political ideals. Foreseeing the doom to which his country was hurrying because of the short-sighted unspiritual policy of the religious leaders, he protests against the growing zealotic spirit of the party and labours to bring back his fellow-Phari-

sees to the old ideals which had been cherished and followed by the Chasidim or early Pharisaic party.

The duty of the faithful is not to resort to arms, but simply to keep the law, and prepare through repentance for the personal intervention of God on their behalf.

Thus, while popular expectations associated with the Coming of the Messiah were earthly and political, and the Pharisaic party itself more and more yielded to popular Messianic beliefs, there never was a time when some man of deeper religious spirit and Apocalyptic vision did not utter his protest; and among these was John the Baptist, whom Jesus characterised as the greatest of the prophets, and identified with the popularly expected Elijah, whose coming would immediately precede the Messianic age.

John The Baptist

John the Baptist aroused extraordinary interest among all classes of the people because after centuries, during which the prophetic voice had not been heard in the land, he spoke with the old conviction and the old authority as one bearing a message direct from God to the nation. The excitement was intensified by the character of his message which was summed up in the one phrase, "Repent ye, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand." Under stress of the spirit that burned

within him John the Baptist definitely assumed the rôle of the ancient prophet. He lived the ascetic life, was a man of the wilderness and the solitary place like Elijah, appearing but occasionally in the busy haunts of men. He was not so much a man living among men, as a voice from the Unseen World announcing that the day of judgment and deliverance, for which the nation had so long waited, was at hand. In the finest spirit of the ancient prophets he announced that mere descent from Abraham was not enough, that God was not dependent on any one people, that the judgment of God would not proceed upon racial lines but upon the basis of moral worth, that for the oppressors and the hypocrites in Israel the Day of the Lord would be darkness and not light and that only by bringing forth fruits meet for repentance could any of them hope to share in the blessings of the Messianic Age so near at hand. In him Prophet and Apocalyptist were fused. His fierce denunciations of sin reminded the people of Elijah, and his call to repentance was couched in the very spirit and language of Isaiah; but he gave no encouragement to the political aspiration of the people and never used his immense sway over the multitude to excite revolt. Roman soldiers were not denounced but admonished to be gentle, to refrain from unfair exactions and to be content with their wages. Even Publicans—Jews who for gain had become Roman tax gatherers and were helping to fasten the yoke upon

their country-men—were not urged to sever at once their connection with the hated foreign power, but to "exact no more than that which is appointed you." Whatever John's conception of the approaching crisis may have been, he certainly did not think of it as a revolution led by some warrior king who would place himself at the head of patriot bands, break the Roman yoke, and establish a world-Empire with Jerusalem as its centre.

The New Testament references to John's teaching are meagre but it is evident that like the Apocalyptists he believed the crisis to be imminent, thought of it as a day of Judgment and as ushering in "the Kingdom of God." What he thought concerning the nature of this Kingdom and the character of the Messiah may be gathered from the fact that the necessary preparation for sharing in it was repentance and right living, and that the Messenger of God to bring it in was One mightier than himself who would baptise with the Holy Ghost and with fire. Armies, institutions, new systems, national and religious, new rites, new ceremonies—even the putting away of sin—would not suffice to usher in the new era. There must be a new birth, a new spirit from God. The fire from heaven must descend and be kindled anew in human hearts. This conviction found utterance in the great saying,—"I indeed baptise you with water unto repentance, but He that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am

not worthy to bear; He shall baptise you with the Holy Ghost and with fire." (Matt. 3:11).

This saying evidently appealed to the thought and imagination of Jesus as expressing the true nature of the Kingdom He had come to found, and the means by which alone it could be ushered in. One seems to hear an echo of it in the words, "I came to cast fire upon the earth; and what will I, if it is already kindled? But I have a baptism to be baptised with, and how am I straitened till it be accomplished." Among the last recorded words of Jesus to His disciples when he commissioned them for their world task, were these:—"John truly baptised with water, but ye shall be baptised with the Holy Ghost not many days hence" (Acts 1:5). And He added, "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judæa, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:8). This rather than a restoration of the kingdom to Israel (Acts 1:6) is to be the agency through which His influence is to pervade the whole earth.

Chapter IV

THE COMING OF JESUS

Into this world of thought and imagery with its lower and higher conceptions, its vulgar ambitions and sublime aspirations, Jesus came. In each line of expectancy which led up to His coming, there was some element of truth commingled with much that was false. To conserve and fulfil what was true in them all, while discarding that which was false or outworn, was the problem of Jesus. To reach the people at all and awaken in them any response of heart and mind, he must use words with which they were familiar and imagery which would have some meaning for them. He must at least begin with the religious thought and vocabulary of His nation and His time, for these were the forms under which His own human mind had been educated, and through which He had come to clear consciousness of His own nature and mission.

Whatever thoughts as to His mission in life may have come to Jesus when a boy, the Gospel narratives furnish ample evidence that from the time of His baptism He was clearly conscious of Himself as the One through whom the Kingdom of God was to be established, the law to find its

true embodiment, and the prophecies their fulfilment.

He felt that in His person the love of God and the power of God were present among men to heal and save, to transform all life, to bring in that new and supernatural order when God's omnipotence would act freely in the service of His righteousness and His love to cast out the demons of disease and viciousness and wrong. The consciousness of such virtue within Himself convinced Jesus that the powers of the age to come were already at work in the world if only men had faith to believe it.

Like John he announced that the time was fulfilled and the Kingdom of God at hand, and like John He called to repentance; but He went further than John and asked men to "believe the good news" of a Kingdom already present in their midst. To the Pharisees He said, "If I by the Spirit of God cast out demons, then is the Kingdom of God come upon you" (Matthew 12:28).

In the synagogue at Nazareth He read from Isaiah:

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me; because He anointed me to preach the good tidings to the poor; He hath sent me to proclaim release to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised.

"To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord" (Luke 4:18-19). Then as he closed the book and

sat down He began his address with the statement, "This day hath this scripture been fulfilled in your ears."

To the disciples of John the Baptist who came seeking reassurance for their imprisoned Master and asking, "Art Thou He that cometh, or look we for another?" Jesus gave no direct answer but encouraged them to spend a little time with Him and judge for themselves. During that day He made the blind to see, the deaf to hear, the lame to walk; He touched the leper and his flesh came again as that of a little child; He cast out unclean spirits and the frenzied became sane and pure; He spake the word and he that was dead sat up, and the only son was given back to the widowed Mother; He received publicans and sinners and proclaimed God's pardoning grace to penitent outcasts. Then said He, "Go your way and tell John what things ye have seen and heard. And blessed is he who shall find none occasion of stumbling in me" (Luke 7:22, 23).

Jesus had recognised John to be the greatest of the prophets, His own fore-runner, the Elijah who was to appear before the great and terrible day of the Lord and usher in the Messiah. He felt that what was best in both the prophetic and Apocalyptic conceptions of the Kingdom had found expression in John's preaching, and Himself fulfilled all righteousness by accepting Baptism at the hands of John. But even John could not rise wholly above Jewish limitations and hu-

man expectations; and Jesus feared lest John himself should be made to stumble by a meek and lowly Messiah who went about doing good, the weapons of whose warfare were not might nor power, either natural or supernatural, and whose kingdom and glory would ultimately come through national rejection, personal suffering and sacrificial death.

At the outset of his ministry, with the full consciousness of Messianic powers surging within him, Jesus had faced the whole question as to how far he could fulfil the Messianic expectations of the people. The kingdoms of the world in all their glory passed before His vision, but He could not and would not prostitute His heavenly powers to establish by force any militaristic kingdom of this world.

Nor was He satisfied to be a mere wonder-working Apocalyptic Messiah descending from the pinnacle of the temple in the clouds of heaven. Only as men's hearts were touched and their lives transformed by the love of God could they enter the Kingdom of heaven, and by no such external method could this supreme miracle be wrought.

As Jesus fought His battle alone in the wilderness He perceived that to make the direct spiritual appeal and refuse to be the kind of Messiah the people expected would result in rejection and death, but He deliberately chose the way of the Cross as the price that must be paid for the world's redemption. He was absolutely sure of

His relation to God. There had just come to Him anew at His baptism the assurance that He was the "beloved Son," and now, in the face of threatened failure and death, He rose to the sublime faith that in the sacrifice of this beloved Son sin would be revealed and condemned, the love of God made manifest and the way prepared for the Kingdom of God to come with inner spiritual power.

Not unfrequently some incident omitted in the synoptic Gospels is described in the fourth Gospel with all the vividness of an eye-witness and in such a way as to give a new insight into the order and development of our Lord's ministry. One of these is found in the second chapter of the fourth Gospel and is a most illuminating sequel to the temptation experiences given in the synoptic Gospels.

At the first Passover of His ministry Jesus suddenly appeared in the temple, quietly assumed the moral authority of the Messiah and by striking at temple abuses not only appealed to the conscience of the nation, but roused against Himself a hatred on the part of the high-priestly families which slumbered not until three years later they had Him hanging helpless upon the Cross, and cried in triumphant mockery, "He saved others; Himself He can not save. He is the King of Israel; let Him now come down from the Cross and we will believe on Him" (Matt. 27:41-42).

John's reminiscence of this cleansing of the temple at the very outset of our Lord's public career and the conflict with the Jerusalem authorities which followed, throws a flood of light upon what was passing in the mind of Jesus.

"The Jews therefore answered and said unto Him, What sign shewest thou unto us, seeing that thou doest these things?

"Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.

"Then said the Jews, Forty and six years was this temple in building and wilt thou rear it up in three days?

"But He spake of the temple of His body.

"When therefore He was risen from the dead, His disciples remembered that He had said this unto them, and they believed the scripture, and the word which Jesus had said" (John 2:18-22).

Not only did the rulers determine in their own mind from the time of this first collision with Jesus that He was a dangerous reformer who must be put out of the way as soon as it was possible to get Him into their power, but Jesus *knew* the murderous intent of their hearts and said to them in effect,

"You want a sign, you claim to be ready to believe if only there is evidence. Hypocrites! In your hearts you are already plotting my death! But do your worst, destroy this shrine in which God dwells and through which He is graciously visiting His people, kill this body, and in three

days I will raise it again. That when the hour comes will be the one and all-sufficient sign of my Messiahship."

From such experiences Jesus early concluded that the Nation as such could not be saved, and that its present religious leaders could not become the founders of the New Order, but would fill up the measure of their iniquity and seal the nation's doom by rejection of the Lord's Anointed.

During the main part of His ministry, therefore, He kept away from the Capital and made His appeal to the common people, being moved to compassion by the shepherdless multitudes who flocked about Him: but the significant feature of the Galilean Ministry was the choice and training of disciples through whom the spiritual nature of the Kingdom and the redemptive love of God would be proclaimed to Israel and the world after His death and resurrection.

During all this period His aim was to reveal God the Father, to give true thoughts concerning the Kingdom of God and to show how different is the righteousness of those who enter therein from the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees. For a time He avoided the title Messiah, and requested the inner circle who had learned the secret not to tell it. He was the Anointed of God, the promised Deliverer of whom Moses and the Prophets had spoken, David's greater Son, and He knew it: but the political aspirations and grossly material expectations associated with

that name in the mind of the populace were wholly contrary to the nature and purpose of His mission and until the people knew Him for what He was and had His thought of the Kingdom, the use of that title would only serve to arouse false expectations and involve Him in premature conflict with the Roman Authorities.

But though Jesus was careful not to do or say anything that would appeal to national prejudices or arouse political hopes, it is evident that from the first He applied to Himself the language of Jewish Apocalypse. The expression "Kingdom of God" or "Kingdom of Heaven" is constantly upon His lips. He makes frequent references to "the Son of Man" previsioned in Daniel and Enoch, who is to come in the clouds of heaven, sit on the throne of His glory, judge the nations, and usher in the Kingdom of God. To His disciples, from the first, and toward the end of His ministry in open declarations, He claims to be this Son of Man. Highly symbolic and liable to misinterpretation and abuse, as were the visions and language of Jewish Apocalypse, they offered a truer medium for the expression of the nature and mission of Jesus than did the language of national aspiration. They at least emphasised the supernatural, the heavenly, the divine character of the deliverance to be effected, and Jesus used them as the best available for His purpose. Sanday refers to the remarkable extent to which our Lord accepted and adapted to His own pur-

poses the symbolism which He found already in existence as part of the common stock of ideas of those amongst whom He lived.[1] He also points out that while taking over the transcendent and supernatural side of Jewish expectation, Jesus, in the very act of doing so, transformed and spiritualised it. Gradually through His own person and teaching, He gave to old phrases a truer and richer content: but it was inevitable that in the process there should be much misunderstanding even on the part of the inner circle of disciples who could rise but slowly to His conception of the Kingdom.

[1] "The Life of Christ in Recent Research," Sanday.

Chapter V

THE SON OF MAN

Any careful survey of New Testament phenomena and of the words of the Lord Jesus makes it evident that Jesus identified Himself with the "Son of Man" previsioned in Daniel and Enoch —a supernatural, pre-existent Being who would come from God with the clouds of heaven and inaugurate the New Age.

It was once the rôle of unbelieving critics to admit without question this self-designation of Jesus. The title was supposed to lay emphasis on the true humanity of Jesus, and its constant use by Jesus concerning Himself was quoted as proof that he did not claim to be divine. "Son of Man" was His true title. The name "Son of God" was reflected back from the thought of a later generation. But since the significance of the name in contemporary Apocalyptic literature has become known to scholars, some modern critics escape the logical conclusion by swinging over to the opposite extreme and asserting that the original tradition knew nothing of the title, that it was first bestowed upon Jesus after his death to mark the Christian belief in His divine char-

acter, and that it had no sanction in any words of His own.

There is a type of mind that reverences Jesus but by reason of philosophical presuppositions can not admit the supernatural, and this type of mind seems to be under constraint, whatever blinking of evidence may be necessary, to rule out arbitrarily the authenticity of anything in the record of the evangelists that would constitute a claim on the part of Jesus to be divine or even supernatural.

Let us look at some of the phenomena which have to be explained:

(1) The phrase "Son of Man" in the mouth of our Lord occurs 14 times in Mark, 30 times in Matthew, 25 times in Luke and 12 times in John.

(2) The phrase is found in every Evangelical document that modern criticism postulates in its attempt to solve the Synoptic problem. In the original Marcan source probably 14 times; in the Logia or non-Marcan document at least 8 times. Besides these it occurs 9 times in special matter of Matthew, 8 times in special matter of Luke. (Sanday, "The Life of Christ in Recent Criticism.")

(3) In the Acts this title is used but once, and there most significantly by Stephen, the protomartyr, who in the moment of death gazes into the opened heavens and declares that he sees Jesus, "the Son of Man," standing on the right hand of God.

(4) Not once is the expression used in the whole body of the Epistles and only twice in the Apocalypse, where the reference is more directly to "one like unto a Son of Man" in Daniel.

(5) The phrase is equally rare in early Christian literature, outside the Canon, and it is to be noted that even in the Gospels the writers themselves never address or describe Jesus as "the Son of Man."

There is but one conclusion from all this: The title "Son of Man" certainly did not come from the usage or theology of the early church. The words of Prof. Ernest Scott are a final answer to any such suggestion. "If the title 'Son of Man' was conferred on Jesus by the primitive Church, why is there practically no trace of it in the literature of the Church? The ideas it connoted were fully in harmony with the early Christian beliefs; why should the name itself have fallen so entirely into disuse? Its frequent occurrence in the Gospels and in them alone can reasonably be explained only on the one supposition—that it had come down as an inseparable element of the history of Jesus. The Church had early abandoned it, perhaps on the ground that it was specifically Jewish, and conveyed little meaning, or a positively wrong meaning, to the great body of Gentile converts. But the fact that Jesus had used it was still vividly remembered. In writings that purported to record His actual words, it could not be omitted

or changed into its later equivalents. The employment of it in the fourth Gospel seems to afford evidence that it was thus regarded as a sort of hall-mark of the *ipsissima verba* of Jesus. In that Gospel it is wholly superfluous. Its meaning has become merged in the more explicit title of 'Son of God,' for which the evangelist has a decided preference. Yet he feels himself obliged, on occasion, to make conventional use of the earlier title. It is familiar to his readers as the self-designation of Jesus, and preserves the historical colour and verisimilitude of his work."

Attempts have been made to evade the force of this self-designation of Jesus by asserting that while He used the title "Son of Man" he used it in the third person without applying it to Himself. Now it is true that there are places where Jesus used the expression in such a way that it might apply to some other than Himself if these passages stood alone. "Verily, I say unto you, ye shall not have gone through the cities of Israel until the Son of Man be come" (Matthew 10:23). "He that soweth the good seed is the Son of Man" (Matthew 13:37). "When the Son of Man shall come in His glory and all the angels with Him" (Matthew 25:31). But such passages do not stand alone. No one who has not a preconceived theory to support can read the Gospels without admitting that Jesus applied the term to Himself, and that those who listened to Him understood that he did so. Especially is this true

of the later part of His ministry and of the declaration made before the High Priest:—

"The high priest asked him, and saith unto him, Art thou the Christ, the Son of the blessed?

"And Jesus said, I am: and ye shall see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of power, and coming with the clouds of heaven. And the high priest rent his clothes, and saith, What further need have we of witnesses?

"Ye have heard the blasphemy: what think ye? And they all condemned him to be worthy of death." (Mark 14: 61-64.)

The whole impression left by the Synoptic Gospels, as by the Fourth is that Jesus recognised Himself as the Son of Man from the beginning of His Ministry. But there may be an element of truth in the contention that He did not categorically announce Himself to be the Son of Man. It is evident that during the earlier part of His Ministry Jesus did not publicly announce Himself as the Messiah lest he should awaken false hopes in people who were waiting for a political or military leader who would bring national deliverance; so it is possible that in the earlier months of His ministry He did not directly declare to the people that He was the "Son of Man," but so used the expression in the third person as to set them thinking and allow them to draw their own inferences.

The simplicity of this phrase, its suggestion of a common link between Him and humanity as

such, its suitability as the designation of a suffering Messiah, its association in Daniel and Enoch with the divine power that was to be put forth in human history for the overthrow of evil, the redemption of God's saints, and the reign of righteousness—all combined to make it the name by which our Lord liked best to speak of Himself.

We may well believe that one purpose of Jesus in using this title was to emphasise His humanity and, so to speak, the commonness of His humanity. He belonged to no race or class. He had touched the bottom rung of the ladder and was brother to the commonest.

The Old Testament use of the expression *ben-adham,* "son of man," is confined to poetry and prophecy where it is equivalent to "man," but with the further suggestion of man's weakness and insignificance—one who is man and not God.

"When I consider Thy heavens, the work of Thy fingers,
The moon and the stars which Thou hast ordained;
What is man that Thou art mindful of him,
And the son of man that Thou visitest him?"
(Psalm 8:3 and 4.)

The very next verse, however, goes on to speak of the real dignity of man who with all his frailty is, by reason of the spirit breathed into him and the place given him in creation, but little lower than God. Jesus rightly claimed to be the typical son

of man of whom Israel's poets had sung, for in Him was revealed the intrinsic dignity of our common humanity even in its lowliest forms, and that high partnership with God to which the humblest may rise.

In Ezekiel, the prophet more than sixty times is addressed as *ben-adham*—"son of man," bringing out the contrast between the prophet as one of mankind and the majesty of God (Ezekiel 2: 1, 3, 6, 8, etc.).

In Daniel we have the transition to a new us of this expression, and one which greatly helps us in our effort to understand the significance of the title on the lips of Jesus.

"I saw in the night visions, and behold, there came with the clouds of heaven one like unto a son of man, and he came even to the ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all the peoples, nations, and languages should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed" (Daniel 7: 13-14).

These words give the concluding scene of a vision, in which the world history from the captivity to Christ is represented as a reign of successive beasts. During this period brute force conquers and rules the earth. The Babylonian power is represented by a winged lion, the Median by a devouring bear, the Persian by a four-headed

leopard, the Macedonian by a fierce, unnameable monster with ten horns and iron teeth. Compared with these the fifth figure appears as weak and unarmed, a mere man utterly incapable of overthrowing the beasts by his own power; but the Ancient of Days does this for him; and this is interpreted to mean that to Israel, weak and helpless among the nations, will ultimately be given, by the mighty power of God, universal dominion and that for ever.

Speaking, it may be, with Antiochus IV specially in mind, the writer says:

"And he shall speak words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High; and he shall think to change the times and the law; and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and half a time.

"But the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end.

"And the kingdom and the dominion, and the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High: his kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him" (Daniel 7:25-27).

This is a true bit of Apocalypse. The veil is drawn aside and we see things not as they seem to be now but as they are to be. Ultimately men and not the beasts, the saints and not the wicked are to rule, for this is purposed by God and will

be carried through by his mighty power. In apocalyptic imagery there is pictured before our eyes the great and glorious truth that one day brute force will give way to the spirit of humanity, and that when this kingdom comes it will abide for ever because, unlike the others, it is based on love and not upon force.

How completely this was Jesus' thought of the Kingdom is evident from such passages as:

"And behold, one of them that were with Jesus stretched out his hand, and drew his sword, and smote the servant of the high priest, and struck off his ear.

"Then saith Jesus unto him, put up again thy sword into its place for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword.

"Or thinkest thou that I cannot beseech my Father, and he shall even now send me more than twelve legions of angels?" (Matt. 26:51-53).

"Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

"Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.

"Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.

"Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.

"Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.

"Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.

"Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called sons of God.

"Blessed are they that have been persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

"Blessed are ye when men shall reproach you, and persecute you, and say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake.

"Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven; for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you" (Matthew 5:3-12).

"Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom" (Luke 12:32).

Daniel's "Son of Man" rather than David's Son sitting upon David's throne was our Lord's truest point of contact with Old Testament prophecy, hence His choice of the name. It gave true expression of what he was, the character of the Kingdom he came to found and the manner of its coming.

If one thing is clearer than another in the teaching of Jesus, and may be described as his distinctive message, it is that the conquering life is the life of humility, self-surrender, and service.

In contrast to the world powers, Jesus will conquer not by brute force but by the appeal to righteousness and love with which the power of God is linked. When his disciples dream of a Mes-

siah lording it over the nations from an earthly throne with themselves occupying positions of power on His right hand and on His left, and begin to quarrel among themselves as to precedence, He answers:

"Ye know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them.

"Not so shall it be among you: but whosoever would become great among you shall be your minister,

"And whosoever would be first among you shall be your servant;

"Even as the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many" (Matt. 20:25-28).

This last verse shows how Jesus had associated in His own mind Daniel's "Son of Man" with the suffering servant of Jehovah in Is. LIII, having found there also a point of contact between Old Testament prophecy and His own inner consciousness of his Messianic mission.

God will give to his servant a place among the great, and the spoil of the strong shall come to Him because He, the pure one, has yielded Himself to bear the sins of many and has been willing to pour out his soul unto death that others may be saved.

Numerous passages indicate how more and more clearly as He went forward in His ministry,

and the forces of opposition closed in upon Him, our Lord's thought of Himself as the Son of Man was associated with an ultimate crisis of suffering and death in which the redeeming love of God would be revealed, the power of evil overcome and the new spirit awakened in the hearts of men. Confining ourselves to Mark's record alone, we have this group of passages:

Mark 8:31.
Mark 9:12-31.
Mark 10:33-34.
Mark 10:45.
Mark 14:41.

But betrayal, suffering and death are not the end of our Lord's vision. Many of the passages which foretell His death express the assured conviction of resurrection. He who suffers to the uttermost on behalf of others is the Son of Man to whom shall eventually be given dominion and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations and languages may serve Him. The suffering Son of Man will rise again by the power of God and with all His saints be vindicated in a glory greater than apocalyptist ever pictured. In His later ministry Jesus uses language which proves beyond a doubt that He takes to Himself the title Son of Man in the full apocalyptic significance given to it not only in Daniel but in the Book of Enoch.

As indicated in a previous chapter, that part

of the Enoch Literature known as the Similitudes sets forth the "Son of Man" as no longer a symbol of the saints, but as a divine figure, personal, pre-existent, coming at God's appointed time, sitting upon the throne of His glory, overthrowing the powers of evil, raising the dead, executing judgment, establishing the Kingdom of God and reigning forever. The similarity between words spoken by Jesus concerning Himself and the language of Enoch is so marked as to make it practically certain that Jesus was quoting from Enoch and applying the language to Himself.

For instance we read in Enoch Chapters XLV and LXIX:

"On that day mine Elect One will sit on the throne of His glory and make choice of men's deeds.

"The name of that Son of Man had been revealed unto them and He sat on the throne of His glory, and the sum of judgment was committed unto Him, the Son of Man, and He caused the sinners and those who have led the world astray to pass away and be destroyed from off the face of the earth.

"For that Son of Man hath appeared and has seated Himself on the throne of His glory, and all evil shall pass away before His face, and the word of that Son of Man shall go forth, etc."

Now compare with these passages such sayings of our Lord as:

"For the Son of Man shall come in the glory

of His Father with His angels; and then shall He render unto every man according to His deeds.

"Verily I say unto you, There be some of them that stand here, which shall in no wise taste of death till they see the Son of Man coming in His Kingdom" (Matthew 16:27-28).

"But when the Son of Man shall come in His glory, and all the angels with him, then shall He sit on the throne of His glory.

"And before Him shall be gathered all the nations; and He shall separate them one from another, as the shepherd separateth the sheep from the goats" (Matthew 25:31-32).

It is important to note that the judgment pictured in these and following verses is no mere spectacular bit of apocalypse characterised by Jewish vindictiveness. It rests upon the deepest principles of the moral and spiritual life as determined by relation to Jesus Himself, the true brother of all men, and is in harmony with the whole trend of our Lord's teaching in the Sermon on the Mount concerning the Kingdom and those who constitute it; but the imagery is from Enoch.

Thus, in the very act of declaring Himself the true brother of the lowliest, the King of Love, the suffering servant who gives His life a ransom for many, Jesus, by reference to Daniel and Enoch, claims to be the appointed Judge of all mankind, the ultimate and supreme ruler of men and nations.

With the title "Son of Man" are associated all

His highest claims. "The angels of God ascend and descend upon the Son of Man" (John 1:51). "The Son of Man hath power on earth to forgive sins" (Mark 11:10). "The Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath" (Mark 11:28). "The Son of Man sits on the right hand of power and comes in the clouds of heaven" (Matthew 26:64). "The Son of Man sits on the throne of his glory and judges the nations" (Matthew 25:31-32). If the title "Son of Man" suggests the non-political and non-militarist character of our Lord's Mission and links Him with all who in their weakness rely upon the Divine power, it is at the same time a claim to be that supernatural One who is sent from God at the appointed hour to end the old world order and usher in the long-promised Kingdom.

Chapter VI

THE SON OF MAN COMING IN GLORY

As we have seen in the previous chapter, not only did Jesus designate Himself the "Son of Man," not only did He clearly foresee His sufferings and death, He also foretold His resurrection and enthronement on the right hand of power and described in Apocalyptic symbol a future coming in glory—a coming to execute judgment when evil is at its height and the wicked and the worldly are least expecting Him. And what is more, the first disciples evidently expected this coming of the Lord in glory to judge the wicked and establish His Kingdom within their own lifetime. They understood the words of Jesus in that way.

Several passages are quoted herewith that the reader may see at a glance the language used by our Lord and how it was remembered and recorded by the first generation of disciples who had companied with the Lord.

"But immediately, after the tribulation of those days, the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken:

"And then shall appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.

"And He shall send forth His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

"Now from the fig tree learn her parable: when her branch is now become tender, and putteth forth its leaves, ye know that the summer is nigh.

"Even so ye also, when ye see all these things, know ye that He is nigh, even at the doors.

"Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass away, till all these things be accomplished" (Matthew 24:29-34).

"But of that day or that hour knoweth no one, not even the angels in heaven, neither the Son but the Father.

"Take ye heed, watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is.

"It is as when a man sojourning in another country, having left his house, and given authority to his servants, to each one his work, commanded also the porter to watch.

"Watch therefore: for ye know not when the Lord of the house cometh, whether at even, or at midnight, or at cock crowing, or in the morning,

"Lest coming suddenly He find you sleeping.

"And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch" (Mark 13:32-37).

"And He said unto the disciples, The days will come, when ye shall desire to see one of the days of the Son of Man, and ye shall not see it.

"And they shall say to you, Lo, there! Lo, here! go not away or follow after them.

"For as the lightning, when it lighteneth out of the one part under the heaven, shineth unto the other part under heaven; so shall the Son of Man be in His day.

"But first must He suffer many things and be rejected of this generation."

"And as it came to pass in the days of Noah, even so shall it be also in the days of the Son of Man.

"They ate, they drank, they married, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all.

"Likewise even as it came to pass in the days of Lot; they ate, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded;

"But in the day that Lot went out from Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all:

"After the same manner shall it be in the day that the Son of Man is revealed" (Luke 17:22-30).

As in the days of Noah and the days of Lot, just when wickedness is at its height, when men

are utterly given up to worldliness and sin and lust without thought of the coming judgment, will the Son of Man appear. His coming will be like the lightning flash, sudden and destructive. But this crisis of sudden judgment, in which the wicked are overwhelmed, true to Apocalyptic vision, will mean deliverance for the saints and the ushering in of the Kingdom of God.

"And then shall they see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory.

"But when these things begin to come to pass, look up, and lift up your heads, because your redemption draweth nigh.

"And He spake to them a parable; Behold the fig tree and all the trees:

"When they now shoot forth, ye see it and know of your own selves that the summer is now nigh.

"Even so ye also, when ye see these things coming to pass, know ye that the Kingdom of God is nigh.

"Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass away, till all things be accomplished."

"Heaven and earth shall pass away; but my words shall not pass away.

"But take heed to yourselves, lest haply your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and that day come on you suddenly as a snare:

"For so shall it come upon all them that dwell on the face of all the earth.

"But watch ye at every season, making supplication, that ye may prevail to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man" (Luke 21:27-36).

The New Testament, outside of the Gospels, bears constant evidence to the fact that the imminent coming of our Lord in power and great glory to overthrow the wicked and reward the faithful was not only presented as a reason for immediate repentance but held out before Christians as their incentive to holiness, their comfort in tribulation, their encouragement to remain true under the fires of persecution.

Peter, preaching in Jerusalem shortly after Pentecost, cries:

"Repent ye therefore, and turn again, that your sins may be blotted out, that so there may come seasons of refreshing from the presence of the Lord;

"And that He may send the Christ who hath been appointed for you, even Jesus:

"Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restoration of all things whereof God spake by the mouth of his holy prophets which have been since the world began" (Acts 3:19-21).

At a much later period, when writing a letter of comfort to Christians in Asia Minor, He thus addresses the elders or bishops who were bearing the brunt of the persecution:

"The elders therefore among you I exhort, who

am a fellow-elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, who am also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed:

"Tend the flock of God which is among you, exercising the oversight, not of constraint, but willingly, according unto God, nor yet for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind;

"Neither as lording it over the charge allotted to you, but making yourselves ensamples to the flock.

"And when the chief Shepherd shall be manifested, ye shall receive the crown of glory, that fadeth not away" (1 Peter 5:1-4).

To Christians at Thessalonica who were troubled because some of their number had died before the Lord's return and thus seemed to have been denied a place in the Messianic Kingdom, Paul writes:—

"But we would not have you ignorant, brethren, concerning them that fall asleep; that ye sorrow not, even as the rest, which have no hope.

"For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also that are fallen asleep in Jesus will God bring with him.

"For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we that are alive, that are left unto the coming of the Lord, shall in no wise precede them that are fallen asleep.

"For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven, with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:

"Then we that are alive, that are left, shall together with them be caught up in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

"Wherefore comfort one another with these words.

"But concerning the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that aught be written unto you.

"For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night.

"When they are saying, Peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall in no wise escape.

"But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief" (I Thessalonians 4:13-18; 5:1-4).

A little later He holds out this same hope to steady these same Thessalonian Christians in the midst of persecution:

"So that we ourselves glory in you in the churches of God for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and in the afflictions which ye endure:

"Which is a manifest token of the righteous judgment of God; to the end that ye may be counted worthy of the Kingdom of God, for which ye also suffer:

"If so be that it is a righteous thing with God to recompense affliction to them that afflict you;

"And to you that are afflicted rest with us, at the revelation of the Lord Jesus from heaven with the angels of his power in flaming fire, rendering vengeance to them that know not God and to them that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus:

"Who shall suffer punishment, even eternal destruction from the face of the Lord and from the glory of his might,

"When He shall come to be glorified in His saints, and to be marvelled at in all them that believed—because our testimony unto you was believed—in that day" (II Thessalonians 1:4-10).

There can be no doubt that Paul, during the earlier years of his ministry, and the first generation of Christians in general, looked for the end of the age and the personal visible return of the Lord to judge the wicked and be glorified in His saints within their own lifetime.

The speedy return of the Lord in the clouds of heaven is the hope of that great Christian Apocalypse which we speak of as the Book of Revelation. It is an unveiling of things which must "shortly come to pass," is intended to comfort and steady persecuted Christians, is written by John, "a brother and companion in tribulation and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ," and strikes at the outset the keynote of the whole book—"Behold He cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see Him, and they also that pierced Him; and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of Him, even so, Amen."

After the picture of the final victory of the Lamb and His persecuted saints, the final judgment, the new heaven and the new earth, and the new Jerusalem coming down from God out of heaven, the book ends with this assurance:

"He which testifieth these things saith, Yea: I come quickly. Amen: come Lord Jesus" (Rev. 22:20).

When the first generation had passed and still the Lord had not come to judgment and it seemed as if His promise had failed, scoffers began to taunt the Christians and say, "Where is the promise of His coming? for since the fathers fell asleep all things continue as they were from the beginning of the Creation."

The writer of II Peter answers their taunts by saying that the delay is due to the long suffering of God "who is not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance," and reminds his readers that "one day is with the Lord as a thousand years and a thousand years as one day." The presence of these scoffers is itself an evidence of the last times, and all may rest assured that "the day of the Lord will come as a thief; in which the heaven shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall be dissolved with fervent heat, and the earth and the works that are therein shall be burned up" (II Peter 3:10).

Then he proceeds to draw the lesson, "Seeing that these things are thus all to be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy living and godliness.

"Looking for and earnestly desiring the coming of the day of God, by reason of which the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat.

"But according to his promise, we look for new

heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.

"Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for these things, give diligence that ye may be found in peace without spot and blameless in his sight" (II Peter 3:11-14).

Chapter VII

HOW FAR DID THE TEACHINGS OF JESUS JUSTIFY THE EXPECTATION OF THE EARLY CHRISTIANS?

We have now to face a serious and a difficult question. How far was this expectation of the first generation of Christians (an expectation never realised in the form their dreams had pictured) justified by the hope and teaching of Jesus Himself?

There is a modern school of New Testament critics, of whom Schweitzer is a typical representative, who stress the Apocalyptic teachings of Jesus as the most original, genuine and characteristic elements in the records; and present Jesus to us as an enthusiastic young student of Apocalypse who, toward the close of His brief career, lost His balance and taught His disciples that through death and resurrection He would be exalted to the right hand of God, become the "Son of Man," described by Daniel and Enoch, and return on the clouds of heaven, to judge the wicked, reward His disciples and usher in the Kingdom of God.

It is important, therefore, that we should make an honest attempt to understand the mind of

Christ and discover from the earliest sources what really was His outlook upon the future.

A study of the Gospels affords ample evidence that Jesus did not share the hope of popular revolutionary messianism which was interested mainly in a new social and political era, and dreamed that it might be inaugurated by a successful revolt. Like the Apocalyptists, He looked for a Kingdom of supernatural grandeur that would come through the power of God and not by any contrivance of man. As Professor A. G. Hogg has expressed it, "by the Coming of the Kingdom, Christ meant the same event as the Apocalyptists had meant (and as the greatest of the prophets had described), namely, the arrival of a new age when God would at last let Himself act in the way in which faith had always felt it only natural that He should act, giving His omnipotence free play in the service of His righteousness, an age in which supernatural force would be available for the conquest of sin and wrong, suffering and death."

At the very beginning of His ministry there came to Jesus a decisive confirmation of His call (Mark 1:9-11). He saw right into the open heavens and was assured that to Him had come that special anointing of the Spirit which fitted him as the man of God's own choice to usher in the Kingdom of God on earth. Though He does not at first publicly announce His Messiahship, He follows up John's message with the assurance

that "the time has fully come" when the supernatural Kingdom of God is at the point of breaking through if only men will repent and believe the good news.

The consciousness of His mission, and of His peculiar relationship to the Father having been confirmed to Him at His baptism, there follows immediately the temptation in the wilderness, where Jesus faces the whole question of the method and Spirit of His ministry, and once for all repudiates popular messianic ideals as being not God's way but suggestions from the devil. Absolute faith in God, absolute loyalty to the Father, the manifestation in His own person of God's tender, loving readiness to save the sin cursed, a willingness to pay any price even to the forfeiting of His own life to save men from their sins—these are to be the weapons of His warfare. As He goes forward in His ministry, He is increasingly assured that the powers of the age to come are already present in His person. Sickness gives place to health; the flesh of the leper comes again like that of a little child; the frenzied and the foul grow calm and sweet and sane; the palsied rise up and walk with the glad consciousness that forgiveness has preceded and made possible the new physical strength; the destructive forces of nature yield obedience to the voice of God's perfect Man; even death is rebuked, and the grave robbed of its victims. And when something of this power begins to pass to His

disciples, Jesus is filled with holy exultation for He sees that at last the reign of Satan is broken, and the beginning of the end has come (Mark 2:1-12; Matthew 11:2-6; Matthew 12:28; Luke 10:17-21).

There is little doubt that at the beginning of His ministry, Jesus wrought in the hope that the nation would know the day of its visitation, that Israel would respond with a great faith and make it possible for the omnipotence of God to act freely in the transformation of all human life. One can not help noting how genuine was the wonder and the disappointment of Jesus at the unbelief of the Jewish people, and how reluctantly He relinquished the hope that they would so respond to His ministry as to avert judgment and make possible a speedy consummation of the Kingdom.

"And Jesus said unto them, A prophet is not without honour, save in His own country, and among His own kin, and in His own house.

"And He could there do no mighty work, save that He laid His hands upon a few sick folk, and healed them.

"And He marvelled because of their unbelief. And He went round about the villages teaching" (Mark 6:4-6).

"In that very hour there came certain Pharisees, saying to Him, Get thee out and go hence: for Herod would fain kill thee.

"And He said unto them, Go and say to that

fox, Behold I cast out devils and perform cures to-day and to-morrow, and the third day I am perfected.

"Howbeit I must go on my way to-day and to-morrow and the day following; for it can not be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem.

"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killeth the prophets, and stoneth them that are sent unto her! how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her own brood under her wings, and ye would not!

"Behold, your house is left unto you desolate; and I say unto you, ye shall not see me, until ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord" (Luke 13:31-35).

"And when He drew nigh He saw the city and wept over it.

"Saying, If thou hadst known in this day, even thou, the things which belong unto peace, but now they are hid from thine eyes.

"For the days shall come upon thee, when thine enemies shall cast up a bank about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side;

"And shall dash thee to the ground, and thy children within thee, and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation" (Luke 19:41-44).

If only the chosen people had responded to the call of their Messiah and yielded themselves to the love and power of God now made manifest in Jesus they might have become the bearers of

His message and the founders of His kingdom throughout the world. Jesus came to His own and had His own received Him it would have been made manifest that God could, through long centuries of moral discipline leading up to the incarnation of His beloved Son, conquer sin and establish the heavenly Kingdom among men.

Had Israel responded with a faith adequate to the message and person of Jesus, and yielded themselves to the love and power of God now made manifest, there would have been no cross, and this acceptance of the Incarnate Son would have proved that God could conquer sin and redeem the world and bring in the heavenly Kingdom apart from such a sacrifice as that of Calvary. It was the fact of the Cross that finally revealed the moral necessity for the Cross; and it is evident that early in His ministry Jesus foresaw the moral certainty that the political hopes of the people, the religious pride of the Pharisees, and the worldly cunning of the Sadducees would repudiate God's thought of the Kingdom, and, in His person, slay the Lord's Anointed.

"The Jews therefore answered and said unto Him, What sign shewest thou unto us, seeing that thou doest these things?

"Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up" (John 2:18-19).

"And Jesus said unto them, Can the sons of the bride-chamber fast while the bridegroom is

with them? As long as they have the bridegroom with them they can not fast.

"But the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken away from them, and then will they fast in that day" (Mark 2:19-20).

"An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given unto it, but the sign of Jonah. And he left them, and departed" (Matthew 16:4).

"From that time Jesus began to shew unto His disciples, how that He must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and the third day be raised up" (Matthew 16:21).

Not yet had sin done its worst; not yet had that Old Testament picture of the suffering Servant of Jehovah found adequate fulfilment. With all the suffering of God's saints, not yet had the life been given that could ransom the many; not yet was there possible to man an adequate horror of sin, or final deliverance from its power. That must come through the rejection, crucifixion and resurrection of the very one in whom the Kingdom first found adequate expression—God's perfect Son. But He is ready to pay the price. True, His sensitive nature can not face the awful crisis of suffering and shame which the world's unbelief and sin are to heap upon Him, without a convulsion of His whole being, and the horror of a great darkness settling down upon His soul. But the Son of Man, in the true spirit of the King-

dom, has come not to be ministered unto but to minister, and He steadily moves forward to that second baptism through which alone a new era can be inaugurated.

Foreseeing His rejection and death, Jesus early made provision for the carrying on of the work after His departure, and devoted a very large part of His ministry to the training of the Twelve. He had no narrow vision of what was necessary ere human history could issue in the consummated Kingdom of God. The glad tidings that the powers of the world to come have been revealed in His person and sealed to men in His death and resurrection must be proclaimed by His disciples over all the inhabited earth (Matthew 24:14). These disciples are to be His witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judæa and Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth (Acts 1:8). They are to disciple all nations (Matthew 28:19). Quite apart from the testimony of the fourth gospel it is evident that much of our Lord's thought was centred on the training of disciples who would carry on the work of the Kingdom when He was gone.

The resurrection and ascension of Jesus assure the disciples that though the Kingdom has not come in the form they had looked for, their Messiah-King has conquered and is enthroned at the right hand of God. They remember His promise of another Advocate, even the Spirit of truth, who will come to them as the power and presence of

their risen Lord to equip them for their task, and who will abide with them all the days even unto the end of the age, when the Master who has gone from them in human form will, according to His own promise, appear again in glory and consummate the Kingdom which in the heart and willingness of God has been awaiting man from the beginning.

There can be no doubt that from Jesus Himself the first disciples learned to fix their eyes on His future coming in glory to judge mankind and consummate the Kingdom already begun in their hearts, and of which His indwelling spirit was an earnest. That was the goal on which He taught them to fix their eyes, and His language did seem to suggest that it was near. The reminiscences of Jesus' teaching in Matthew XXIV and XXV and corresponding passages in the other gospels certainly indicate that His disciples understood Him to picture the great consummation as coming within the lifetime of folk then living. After the most realistic pictures of the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory, all the three evangelists quote as the words of Jesus, "Verily I say unto you, that this generation shall not pass until all these things be done."

The language of the New Testament, which beyond doubt was the language and expressed the hope of the Apostolic Church, can not reasonably be accounted for without admitting that Jesus taught the imminence if not the immediacy of His

return and in view thereof urged upon His disciples industry, watchfulness and readiness.

But with the fullest and frankest admission of the faith and hope of the Apostolic age, and the warrant there was for this faith and hope in the words of Jesus, we must not overlook another fact, viz., that there were elements in the teaching of Jesus, even as treasured and reported among the first Christians, which might have modified their thought as to the time and character of our Lord's appearing, if Jewish conceptions of the Messianic Kingdom and the method of its coming had not blinded their minds to much of the deeper meaning in Christ's teaching. Only through the logic of events, and the further teaching of the Holy Spirit could some of the Lord's words be apprehended in their ultimate significance.

These aspects of our Lord's teaching will be considered in succeeding chapters.

Chapter VIII

THE TIME AND MANNER OF OUR LORD'S COMING MORALLY CONDITIONED

While the three synoptic gospels all agree in reporting Jesus to have said that His coming in glory would take place within the lifetime of His own generation, they also agree in recording a declaration of Jesus that the precise time is known to no one save God. The words of Jesus as quoted by Mark are:—

"Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.

But of that day or that hour knoweth no one, not even the angels in heaven, neither the Son but the Father" (Mark 13:32-33).

Is not this just another way of saying that, while to God for whom past, present, and future are alike present, the day and the hour are known, there is no fixed and arbitrary time for this crowning day of human history. The nearness or farness of the time depends on the rapidity with which evil comes to its height, and the faithfulness of His disciples to their trust. "When the fruit is ripe, straightway he putteth forth the sickle because the harvest has come" (Mark 4:29). So too, when, after His resurrection, the

disciples, recognising that nothing is impossible to their risen Lord, naturally expect an immediate consummation, and ask, "Dost thou at this time restore the Kingdom to Israel?" He tells them that the times and seasons are morally conditioned in such a way that God only can know. In the meantime, they are to be His witnesses in all the earth, and the more effectively their work is done the more will they hasten the day of His glorious return, when the righteousness and love of Israel's God will be vindicated before all the world.

In the fourth Gospel there is preserved for us a most important element in our Lord's teaching, not fully apprehended by the first generation of Christians, and quite inadequately expressed in the earlier Gospels. Whole chapters in John have little corresponding to them in the Synoptic Gospels, save the commission given by the risen Christ to the disciples immediately before the Ascension. It is significant of the different emphasis in the fourth Gospel that the teachings of Jesus contained in Chapters XIV-XVII occupy in this Gospel a place corresponding to the Apocalyptic teaching of Jesus in the Synoptic Gospels.

These Chapters show what great things Jesus made possible for His disciples and what great things He expected of His disciples. Take such a passage as this:—

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also,

and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto the Father.

"And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.

"If ye shall ask me anything in my name that will I do.

"If ye love me, ye will keep my commandments.

"And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another comforter, that he may be with you for ever.

"Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world can not receive; for it beholdeth him not, neither knoweth him: ye know him, for he abideth with you, and shall be in you" (John 14:12-17).

Jesus was conscious that in His person the Kingdom of God was already present and the powers of the age to come already operating among men, and He believed that His death and resurrection and the coming of the Holy Ghost would give to the message of the Kingdom such irresistible force that in each humblest believer the powers of the age to come would be more fully manifested than in His own life.

As Jesus thought of the future His hope was that in His disciples would be found a faith so perfect and a power of the Spirit so unhindered as would make possible the speedy ushering in of the perfected Kingdom. And as none could tell when the hour would come for the breaking in of the New Order and the consummation of all

things, there ought ever to be faithful witness bearing and eager expectancy on the part of His disciples.

If the Kingdom has tarried these 2,000 years and still seems far away it has been due not to any lack in the redemptive work of Jesus, nor to any inadequacy in the message, nor to any withholding of the Spirit's power, but to the unbelief of the Church and the moral impossibility of bestowing the powers of the age to come upon those who would fail to use them in the spirit of Jesus. The Kingdom has tarried, but it need not have tarried had the disciples of Jesus lived up to their privileges and used the powers which Jesus placed at the disposal of all who would seek the first Kingdom of God and His righteousness.

Another fact to be borne in mind when trying to discover what Jesus really expected in the near future is that many passages in which Jesus clothes his thought wholly in the language of Jewish Apocalypse, when studied closely, show that He is thinking of consummations which did take place within the lifetime of His disciples.

Take such a passage as this:—

"For whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words, of him shall the Son of Man be ashamed, when he cometh in his own glory, and the glory of the Father, and of the holy angels.

"But I tell you of a truth. There be some of them that stand here which shall in no wise taste

[1] See "Christ's Message of the Kingdom," Chap. 4, A. G. Hogg.

of death till they see the Kingdom of God'' (Luke 9:26-27).

Here we have the very language of Jewish Apocalypse—the spectacular coming of the Son of Man in the glory of the Father and surrounded by angels, and yet some standing with Jesus at the time will live to see it. The corresponding passage in Mark reads thus:—

''For whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man also shall be ashamed of him, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.

''And He said unto them, Verily I say unto you, There be some here of them that stand by, which shall in no wise taste of death, till they see the Kingdom of God come with power'' (Mark 8:38-9:1).

Here we have the added words ''come with power.'' The kind of coming which the early Christians looked for did not take place before those standing about Jesus tasted death, but the Kingdom of God had indeed ''come with power'' when Jesus rose from the dead, ascended into glory, and as the pledge of His enthronement sent forth the gift of the Holy Spirit. The Kingdom of God had indeed come with power, when thousands in the city of Jerusalem, where Jesus was crucified, were convicted of sin and confessing their faith were baptised into His name. Yes, the Kingdom of God had come with power in the

hearts of all the disciples who had passed through the over-mastering experiences of those first days of "power from on high." They no longer had any doubt as to the final issue, could preach with confidence to the world and, when necessary, seal their testimony with their blood.

Look now at Matthew's version of our Lord's words on this same occasion:—

"For the Son of Man shall come in the glory of his Father with His angels, and then shall He render unto every man according to His deeds.

"Verily I say unto you, There be some of them that stand here, which shall in no wise taste of death till they see the Son of Man coming in His Kingdom" (Matthew 16:27-28). In Aramaic this might well mean—"See the Son of Man bringing in His Kingdom."

Note the use of the present participle—"Son of Man *coming* (ἐρχομενον) in His Kingdom." This suggests that the reference may not be to a momentary act but to a process—the beginning of a new order of things. Compare the words of our Lord when challenged by the High Priest at the time of His trial.

"Jesus saith unto him, Thou hast said; nevertheless I say unto you, Henceforth ye shall see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of power, and coming on the clouds of heaven" (Matthew 26:64).

Here, too, we have the present participle ἐρχόμενον and the Greek words translated

henceforth are ἀπ' ἄρτι, i.e., "From this time on."

In Luke the phrase used is ἀπο τοῦ νῦν "From the now" (Luke 22:69).

Jesus saw what neither His disciples nor His enemies could then see—that the hour of His rejection and crucifixion, which seemed to have brought final defeat, was the hour of His real triumph. His death was the beginning and the conditioning moral cause of all His future glory. From that hour, the world's conviction of sin would begin. From that hour He would draw men of all races to Himself. From that hour, and more and more as time advanced, would He sit on the right hand of power and come in the clouds of heaven.

From these and other passages we may legitimately infer that while Jesus used Apocalyptic language, He at the same time taught, had His disciples been able to receive it, that His coming in power and great glory would be something more than one spectacular event, would be in fact a series of divine judgments and spiritual victories, the beginning of which they themselves would witness.

For instance His resurrection following upon the crucifixion was not only a moral triumph but a coming of the Son of Man in judgment.

The Sanhedrin condemned Him to death for blasphemy because He claimed to be the Son of God. The resurrection was God's judgment of

their judgment, God's placing of the Son of Man upon His throne and the inauguration of the new dispensation of the Spirit.

The destruction of Jerusalem and of the Temple was another coming of the Son of Man. "And as some spake of the Temple, how it was adorned with goodly stones and offerings, He said, As for these things which ye behold, the days will come, in which there shall not be left here one stone upon another that shall not be thrown down. And they asked him, saying, Master, when therefore shall these things be? And what shall be the sign when these things are about to come to pass?" (Luke 21:5-7).

In this passage a single, definite question is asked of Jesus—"When shall this complete destruction of the temple buildings take place, and by what sign may we know that this judgment is at hand?" What follows is the answer Jesus gave to that question.

That none may fail to read the whole passage we quote it in full, and ask the reader to bear in mind that this is Luke's record of the language in which Jesus foretold not the end of the world but the destruction of the temple and the overthrow of the old Jewish order.

"And He said, Take heed that ye be not led astray: for many shall come in my name, saying, I am He: and, The time is at hand: go ye not after them.

"And when ye shall hear of wars and tumults,

be not terrified: for these things must needs come to pass first; but the end is not immediately.

"Then said He unto them, Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against Kingdom:

"And there shall be great earthquakes, and in divers places famines and pestilences; and there shall be terrors and great signs from heaven.

"But before all these things, they shall lay their hands on you, and shall persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues and prisons, bringing you before kings and governors for my name's sake.

"It shall turn unto you for a testimony.

"Settle it therefore in your own hearts, not to meditate beforehand how to answer:

"For I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to withstand or to gainsay.

"But ye shall be delivered up even by parents, and brethren and kinsfolk, and friends; and some of you shall they cause to be put to death.

"And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake.

"And not a hair of your head shall perish. In your patience ye shall win your souls.

"But when ye see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that her desolation is at hand.

"Then let them that are in Judæ flee unto the mountains; and let them that are in the midst of her depart out; and let not them that are in the country enter therein.

"For these are days of vengeance, that all things that are written may be fulfilled.

"Woe unto them that are with child and to them that give suck in those days! for there shall be great distress upon the land, and wrath unto this people.

"And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led captive into all the nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.

"And there shall be signs in the sun and moon and stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, in perplexity for the roaring of the sea and the billows;

"Men fainting for fear, and for expectation of the things which are coming on the world: for the powers of the heavens shall be shaken.

"And then shall they see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory.

"But when these things begin to come to pass, look up, and lift up your heads; because your redemption draweth nigh.

"And He spake to them a parable: Behold the fig tree, and all the trees.

"When they now shoot forth, ye see it and know of your own selves that the summer is now nigh.

"Even so ye also, when ye see these things coming to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh.

"Verily, I say unto you, This generation shall not pass away, till all things be accomplished.

"Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away.

"But take heed to yourselves, lest haply your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and that day come on you suddenly as a snare:

"For so shall it come upon all them that dwell on the face of all the earth.

"But watch ye at every season, making supplication that ye may prevail to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man" (Luke 21:8-36).

It should be noted here that the Gospels make no pretence of giving a complete history of the life of Jesus, nor is there any claim that all the events recorded and all the teachings reported are given in their exact historical order. In Matthew's Gospel it is plainly apparent that the teachings of Jesus are grouped according to subjects rather than in their chronological order. Luke approaches his task more nearly in the spirit of the modern historian (Chapter 1:1-4), and I am inclined to agree with Godet that the passage just quoted from Luke gives us the answer of Jesus on this particular occasion, while the parallel passages in Matthew and Mark introduce teachings of Jesus with reference to the general judgment and consummation of all things, which were spoken on other occasions. It is quite evident that Matthew in chapters XXIV and XXV groups together the most significant teachings of

Jesus, at whatever time uttered, bearing upon His coming, the end of the age and the final judgment. It is true we can not read Luke 21:8-36 with the thought that it has reference to nothing more than the question of verse seven concerning the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple, without feeling that the language is strained and overdone; but let us remember that Jesus was speaking to Orientals who were accustomed to figurative language and frequently described earthly commotions and the overthrow of nations as a falling of the stars and a darkening of heaven's light. We might compare the symbolism employed in Isaiah to picture the overthrow of Babylon and Edom (Isaiah 13:9-13).

Of one thing Jesus became absolutely sure before the close of His ministry, that Judaism was doomed, that within a generation would come the dissolution of the national life and the end of the old order. Therefore in the plainest speech possible he warns His disciples to keep themselves free from the political insurrections of the time, to stand out from under the falling edifice, to watch the signs of the times, and flee from the God-forsaken temple and city. They are the children of the new age whose presence and power will be more fully manifest when the old has passed.

We need to remind ourselves how completely the destruction of the temple and with it the Jewish nation did end one age and introduce

another. In a very real sense, the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple was the judgment of the Son of Man upon the nation that rejected Him. It marked the end of the old Jewish age and the ushering in of the Christian era. It was in a very special way the Son of Man coming in His Kingdom. It was the final redemption of the Christian Church from the bonds of Judaism, and altered the whole outlook of Christians as to the future. Jesus might well say concerning this terrible judgment and the events associated with it:

"But when these things begin to come to pass, look up, and lift up your heads; because your redemption draweth nigh" (Luke 21:28).

There is little doubt that during the years which intervened between the ascension of Jesus and the destruction of Jerusalem (the time when the first three Gospels or their sources took shape) the majority of Christians looked forward to the destruction of the temple, the end of the present age, the personal parousia of Jesus and the ushering in of the Kingdom of God as practically one event; and they expected it to take place within their lifetime. We are not surprised therefore to find that in Matthew the question introductory to Jesus' Discourse is elaborated to cover not only the destruction of the temple but the whole field of eschatology.

"And as He sat on the Mount of Olives, the

disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?" (Matthew 24:3).

Moreover it corresponds exactly with Matthew's method that in answer to this more comprehensive question there is grouped in chapters 24 and 25 all the main teachings of Jesus at whatever time given concerning judgment and the coming of the Son of Man.

No doubt much in Matthew XXIV corresponds exactly to Luke XXI and has primary reference to the overthrow of the Jewish temple and the Jewish state and the coming in of the new Christian era; but parts of the chapter are evidently taken from an answer given by Jesus to another question on a different occasion as recorded in Luke XVII, while other passages like Chapters 24:14 and 25:31-46 seem to have direct reference to the final judgment and that coming of the Lord in which the Christian era is to find its consummation.

In the nature of the case, the early Christians could not see the future in full perspective, and while they loyally conserved the great sayings of Jesus just as they fell from His lips, they were not always able to see them or to present them in their exact relationship to one another. We need not, therefore, be surprised at the difficulty experienced in giving a consistent interpreta-

tion of the great discourse concerning the last things in Matthew XXIV and XXV, and the corresponding passages in Mark and Luke.

As we look over the Church's history for 2,000 years, we can see that all great crises are, like the fall of Jerusalem, comings of the Son of Man, judgments which are a part of and pre-figure the final judgment. In fact, our word "crisis" is just the Greek word for judgment. The overthrow of heathenism within the bounds of the Roman Empire, the fall of the Roman Empire itself, the Reformation, the French Revolution, the recent war in which lust of wealth, lust of power, envy, jealousy and hatred, long cherished in the hearts of men and nations, suddenly broke forth in slaughter and ruin unparalleled—these and all other judgments which inevitably follow upon sin are the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven and pre-figure the final judgment and the final victory.

In more than one instance, after Jesus has used the language of Apocalypse and has seemed to refer with great definiteness to the actual personal appearing of the Son of Man, the words which follow indicate that in this language of symbol He has been announcing a principle of judgment everywhere manifest in human history.

For instance, in Matthew 24:27-28, the statement, "For as the lightning cometh forth from the East and is seen even unto the West; so shall the coming of the Son of Man be," is immediately

followed by the statement, "For wheresoever the carcass is, there will the eagles be gathered together."

In Luke XVII, this passage follows a picture of the unexpected judgments and separations that will come upon all classes of people in the days of the Son of Man. Jesus is speaking of a principle of judgment that runs through all history and all human experience. Wherever sin is, national or individual, and that sin is not repented of but goes on to full manifestation, there will the judgment of the Son of Man fall; and just as God's judgments upon Israel reached their culmination in the fall of Jerusalem and the destruction of the temple—the complete and awful overthrow of the Jewish State and the old order, so in the future history of the world wherever sin is ripe the Son of Man will come in judgment, and these partial judgments are in reality a part of that final judgment in which human history will reach its consummation.

Chapter IX

THE COMING OF THE KINGDOM DESCRIBED AS A PROCESS AND A GROWTH

As Christ's coming in judgment is a historical process, so also we find a whole series of passages which describe the coming of His Kingdom as a historical process rather than one supernatural crisis.

As the principle of judgment runs through all history and issues in the final overthrow of evil, so on the positive side there is to be a process of reconstruction issuing in the perfected Kingdom of God, when Jesus will appear as the Anointed King of all mankind—the founder and perfecter of a redeemed humanity. The Resurrection, Pentecost, the freeing of the Christian Church from the shackles of Judaism, the victory of Christianity over the paganism of the Roman Empire, the establishment of the Christian Church on the ruins of that Empire, the Reformation, the modern missionary movement, the new league of nations to maintain peace on earth and the Washington Conference—all these are comings of the Son of Man in His Kingdom which presage the final victory.

No student of the New Testament can fail to notice that the whole nature of the Kingdom as

described by Jesus is such that its coming *must* be a moral and spiritual process rather than some one crisis of judgment and forceful introduction of new conditions. The great burden of our Lord's ministry was the effort to give His disciples a truer conception of what constituted the Kingdom, and to wean them away from the Jewish idea of a Kingdom that could suddenly be set up by force. While enemies may be crushed and obstacles removed by acts of omnipotent power even God cannot set up by force a Kingdom whose characteristics are love and righteousness and purity.

The disciples, like the Pharisees, thought of something outward and spectacular that would dazzle the eyes of men. But when asked by the Pharisees when the Kingdom cometh, Jesus answered them, "The Kingdom cometh not with observation, neither shall they say, lo there, or lo here, for behold the Kingdom is in the midst of you" (Luke 17 : 20-21). In the person of Jesus, in those deeds of love and goodwill wrought in the Father's Name, in the new spirit that cared for the poor and the outcast and sought to save the lost, the Kingdom was already at work in their midst had they the spiritual vision to see it.

In the Beatitudes (Matthew 5 : 3-10) Jesus sets forth the essential characteristics of those who inherit and constitute the Kingdom—The poor in spirit, the meek, those who hunger and thirst after righteousness, the merciful, the pure in heart, the

peace-makers. A Kingdom so constituted can be set up only through the sacrifice of the Cross and the indwelling of Christ's spirit, and must pass from man to man by personal touch and subtle spiritual influence.

In accordance with this teaching as to the character of the Kingdom, many of the parables present its coming as a process. It is like a small morsel of leaven gradually permeating the whole mass and transforming what it touches into its own character (Matthew 13:33). It is like a grain of mustard seed gradually unfolding into a plant as large as a tree (Matthew 13:31-32). It is like a seed which germinates and grows by hidden processes no one can perfectly understand, developing first the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear; and only at the completion of this long process is the sickle cast in and the harvest gathered (Mark 4:26-29).

Even in those passages where Jesus borrows the language of Jewish Apocalypse, He suggests that the consummation will be longer delayed than His disciples anticipate, and that in any case it cannot come until their commission to evangelise the world has been fulfilled (Matthew 24:14). In the parable of the Foolish Virgins, the bridegroom "tarried" (Matthew 25:5). In the parable of the Talents, it is "after a long time the Lord of those servants cometh" (Matthew 25:19). In Luke 12:45, our Lord warns His disciples lest delay in the Master's coming should

tempt to unfaithfulness and abuse of power. Certain of these Parables were evidently spoken of set purpose to teach that there would be no immediate consummation such as the Jews expected in connection with the coming of the Messiah, but a long *absence* of the King during which His servants must carry on the business of the Kingdom. We are expressly told that Jesus spake the Parable of the Pounds, "because He was nigh unto Jerusalem, and they supposed the Kingdom was immediately to appear" (Luke 19:11).

With all His faith in God, His vision of Satan's overthrow, and the full assurance of His own mission, Jesus was not deceived as to the power of evil, the subtlety of sin, and the littleness of men's faith. Deeply as He longed for the final vindication of God's righteousness and love in human history, sure as He was that the Spirit would continue His work on earth, clearly as He saw how all things were possible to faith, He also recognised that the consummation was further away than His disciples anticipated (yes, further away than He Himself at first had hoped), and that long patience and utter faithfulness would be necessary if they were not to lose heart in the long and trying days that intervened.

In His solicitude for their future, Jesus frequently forewarned His disciples, and sought to prepare them for the time when they shall "desire to see one of the days of the Son of Man, and shall not see it" (Luke 17:22-25).

In answer to the request, "What shall be the sign of Thy coming and the end of the age?" Jesus replied:

"Take heed that no man lead you astray.

"For many shall come in my name, saying, I am the Christ; and shall lead many astray.

"And ye shall hear of wars, and rumours of wars; see that ye be not troubled: for these things must needs come to pass; but the end is not yet.

"For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines and earthquakes in divers places.

"But all these things are the beginning of the travail.

"Then shall they deliver you up unto tribulation, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all the nations for my name's sake.

"And then shall many stumble, and shall deliver up one another, and shall hate one another.

"And many false prophets shall arise, and shall lead many astray.

"And because iniquity shall be multiplied, the love of the many shall wax cold.

"But he that endureth to the end, the same shall be saved.

"And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world for a testimony unto all the nations; and then shall the end come" (Matthew 24:4-14).

The early disciples heard and cherished these words of Jesus and were sustained by them in

the midst of disappointment and persecution; but their Jewish conceptions of the Messianic Kingdom, the apparent hopelessness of the task allotted to them, the mocking cry of the wicked—"Where is the promise of His coming?" made it inevitable and even necessary that the future history of the world should be foreshortened to their gaze, and the glorious consummation stand out real and imminent before their eyes.

Chapter X

THERE IS AN END

But if Jesus teaches that the coming of the Son of Man in His Kingdom is a process and one that may be long and slow, He also teaches that there is a consummation. Human history is not for Him a meaningless process leading nowhere, nor is it an endless succession of cycles. There is an end and all who endure to that end shall be saved (Matthew 24:13). The day of the Lord will come when there shall be a final sifting of the evil from the good, when the Son of Man shall be revealed in power and great glory and the righteous shall shine as the sun in the perfected Kingdom of their Father. There is to be a "regeneration" (*παλινγενεσια*)—a "newborn" order of things in which Jesus' disciples who deny themselves and suffer persecution in this present age will have their reward (Matthew 19:27-29). In the corresponding passage Mark instead of using the word "regeneration" speaks of the "age to come" in which the disciples will inherit eternal life (Mark 10: 29-30).

There is an end. The wheat and tares grow together during many weeks in which nothing is apparent save what might be called the natural

development of good and evil, but when a certain stage is reached, the harvest day suddenly ushers in a new act of God and the old order ends (Matthew 13:37-43). Even in the parable of Mark 4:26-29, the period of gradual and natural growth prepares for the reaping time. "The harvest is made possible by the previous quiet stages of germination, springing and ripening, and the putting forth of the sickle is an act both sudden and unlike that which has gone before." (Prof. A. G. Hogg.)

We hear much of pre-millennianism and post-millennianism, but I doubt if there is any basis for either in the teaching of Jesus. Nowhere does Jesus make any reference to a thousand years of righteousness on earth preceding the final judgment.

No recorded teaching of Jesus can be rightly interpreted as an assertion that He will come again in visible form and reign with His saints as an earthly King over the nations of the earth, for a thousand years before the final crisis comes.

That doctrine is not derived from the teaching of Jesus, but is wholly based on the literalistic interpretation of a single highly symbolical passage in the Apocalypse of John (Revelation XX). It is a going back to those crude conceptions of a Messianic Kingdom which Jesus deliberately discarded and from which He sought to deliver His disciples.

But if there is no basis for what is called the

pre-millennial view in the teaching of Jesus, neither do we find anywhere in the teaching of Jesus a statement that through the preaching of the gospel and the quiet working of His spirit there will be a millennium of perfect righteousness *before* His final coming in glory.

Jesus does teach that the mission of His disciples will not be a failure. The gospel must and will be preached to all nations before the end comes (Matthew 24:14). The gates of death shall not prevail against His church (Matthew 16:18). The grain of mustard seed is to become a great tree (Matthew 13:31). The three measures of meal are to be leavened, i.e., the whole world and all life are to be influenced by the Spirit of Jesus (Matthew 13:33). The Disciples are taught to pray and to work that God's Kingdom may come and His will be done on earth as it is in heaven (Matthew 6:10). The aim of the Church and the purpose of the gospel is not merely to fit individual souls for heaven, but to bring heaven to earth, to make human society more and more a Kingdom of God on earth. For this we pray and for this we work in the faith and hope that Jesus shall reign where'er the sun doth his successive journeys run. Nor have the efforts of Christ's disciples been in vain. The name of Jesus is above every name to-day, and in lands like our own His will largely prevails and has wrought a wonderful transformation in earthly life. But with all this, Jesus takes it for

granted, and in the very nature of the case it must be, that the conflict between good and evil will continue until the consummation of all things earthly. The wheat and the tares grow together until the harvest. Not in this life will evil be finally subjugated and eliminated. So long as we are here in bodies of flesh and blood under present world conditions, we develop character and attain holiness only through the struggle with environment and in conflict with that inexplicable mystery of iniquity within us and about us.

Then, too, just as it is in the midst of evil and in active opposition to the evil that good becomes a realised fact in character, so it is in opposition to the good and in the light of gospel truth that evil comes to its full revelation and is ripened for judgment. It required the presence of Jesus in the world to call out the ultimate treachery of which the human heart was capable, and to reveal sin at its worst. In like manner it is only when the gospel has been preached and lived in all nations that the complete forces of good and evil in this world history are brought face to face. Not until the gospel has been proclaimed to all kindreds, races and tribes of men will we know the best and the worst of which humanity as a whole is capable.

It is worthy of note that the greatest and most destructive war of all history did not occur in Asia or Africa but in the centre of Christendom. The advanced education and civilisation of our time,

the marvellous progress man had made in discovering the secrets of nature and learning to control its mightiest forces—all this was utilised for purposes of destruction, and issued in horrors of cruelty, in waste and slaughter, impossible to the race at a less advanced stage of development. We have seen the power of gods in the hands of demons. On the other hand it is nonsense to say that the world is getting worse. No one who knows history will say that the former days were better than these. It may well be claimed not only that the gospel of Christ prevails to-day as never before but that Christ's Spirit permeates society and public life and international politics as never before.

The fact is that as knowledge increases and what we call civilisation advances individuals become both better and worse. Missionary effort is more widely diffused throughout the heathen world to-day and more effective than ever before, while within Christendom Christian character is more general and more highly developed than ever before. But on the other hand evil is more intense, more subtle, more clearly diabolical in its manifestations than ever before. It is in the great centres of Christendom where we find Christian character at its highest and Christian institutions at their best that we also find vice organised and commercialised, and deliberate traffic in the bodies and souls of men. The vilest savages are babes in vice compared with many well-

dressed, sleek-faced men and fashionable women of London, New York, Chicago, Montreal and Toronto. The Roman civilisation which preceded Christianity had within it past masters in vice, who devised subtle forms of indulgence and revelled in depths of wickedness such as barbarous peoples never dreamed of; and, while our Christian civilisation is less coarse and brutal than that of Rome, while the proportion of pure and noble souls is vastly greater, our modern civilisation is no whit behind that of ancient Rome in the exquisite ingenuity of its self-indulgence and the fascination of its gilded vice.

Taking a comprehensive view of the teachings of Jesus, his thought with reference to the future seems to be this:—As the gospel of the Kingdom prevails the struggle between good and evil will become ever more keen, since more and more the battle will be on in all lands and in every sphere of action, and the forces opposing His Kingdom ever more fully revealed in their selfish and diabolical character. This struggle may be long and the faith of the saints sorely tested, but at last a day will come when evil will have reached its culmination and be ripe for final judgment, when the world mission of the Church will have been fulfilled and its character perfected. Then shall the Son of Man appear in the clouds of heaven, close up the old order with judgment, and usher in the new age when all the faithful of past generations and the saints who have endured to the

end and have overcome shall share with Him in a life that is super-earthly and eternal.

An early Christian description of the end, set forth as a physical catastrophe in which the world is consumed by fire to prepare the way for a new heaven and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness, is given in II Peter III; and such a physical ending of this world's history would occur were the earth by some disturbance of the present solar equilibrium to fall into the sun. There can, however, be no sane interpretation of scripture which does not recognise that in all effort to unveil the future and present the final and transcendent issues of good and evil, any language used is necessarily symbolical; and we sober Westerners, with our capacity for intellectual analysis and abstract thought, must remember that Orientals both thought and spoke in pictures.

But whatever outward form the final crisis of history takes, or whatever be the nature of "the age to come," it is not a mere development from the present. It is the beginning of a new order.

"The future age in which we are to have the ideal of a redeemed humanity fully realised will not be a mere development from the present. Our world is to be transfigured, renewed by a definite act which will bring to an end the period of struggle and inaugurate the new age. For the Kingdom as we now know it, men strive, suffer, endure reproach, win it as a moral blessing. The future comes to them as attainment, glory, rest.

"These two æons are separated by the coming of the Son of Man. When He appears the Kingdom as a sphere in which human life wins its good in the face of evil—triumphs only by overcoming obstacles, temptations, failure, defeat, is closed, to be succeeded at the end of all things worldly by a new and glorious era ushered in by His manifestation."[1]

In our effort to make the gospel of Christ effective in every land under heaven, not only are we conveying to an ever increasing number of men God's offer of salvation and extending the Kingdom of Christ on earth; we are hastening the coming of the Lord, when the judgment shall sit, evil receive its death blow, and the Kingdom be manifested in its final glory.

[1] Sir Robert A. Falconer in the *Expositor*.

Chapter XI

THE BLESSED HOPE

It is frequently asked, If the Coming of Christ cannot take place until the gospel has been preached to all nations and the moral purpose of the gospel dispensation has been fulfilled (which seems yet to require ages of history), what significance can there be in such repeated injunctions to watchfulness as the following?

"Take ye heed, watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is.

"It is as when a man, sojourning in another country, having left his house, and given authority to his servants, to each one his work, commanded also the porter to watch.

"Watch therefore: for ye know not when the Lord of the house cometh, whether at even, or at midnight, or at cock-crowing or in the morning:

"Lest coming suddenly He find you sleeping.

"And what I say unto you I say unto all, watch." (Mark 13:33-37).

As already pointed out, every crisis in life, whether in the form of trial or opportunity, is a coming of the Son of Man for which we must be ready; and more especially is death such a

coming. On that last night before crucifixion Jesus said to His disciples:

"Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me.

"In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you.

"And if I go and prepare a place for you, I come again, and will receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." (John 14:1-3).

It is worthy of note that the present tense (ἔρχομαι) "I come" is used here where we would expect the future, and scholars know how frequently the present tense in Greek is used to denote a process or something done habitually. It is as if Jesus said, "I go away, but from now on I will keep coming again to receive you one by one unto myself."

While for the race the time when the present age closes and the new order of the Kingdom is ushered in may be in the distant future, in the case of the individual this change comes at death. Since at death each soul is done with the present order of things, since at death each soul is just as really face to face with the Son of Man as the world will be at the end of the age, Jesus' word of admonition to each disciple is, "Watch."

Moreover, the great consummation which is not arbitrarily fixed but morally conditioned is to be hastened by the eager watchfulness, the faith and prayer and industry of God's expectant saints

(Matthew 6:10; II Peter 3:11-12); and none can tell what new breaking through of Divine power into our human history—what new appearing of the Son of Man, may burst upon our vision at any moment.

Let me quote a sentence written some years before the war—"None can tell what unprecedented forces of good or evil may at any time be let loose in human history, and thereby accelerate beyond anything we now dream of the process of human history. Are there not signs that even now we are hastening toward some great world crisis and need the admonition of Jesus to watch and pray?" How wonderfully that statement has been confirmed by the history of the past seven years. The war has accelerated the process of human history beyond anything that could have been believed a decade ago. The five years of the war have made greater changes than otherwise might have come in five hundred years. The forces of evil were made manifest and came to judgment in the most startling way. The whole world was shaken and now everywhere the old order vanisheth and men's hearts fail them for fear of those things which are coming upon the earth. But we Christians lift up our heads with a new hope, believing that God's redemption draweth nigh. With our God judgment is ever a preparation for mercy, and already there are indications that we have entered upon one of those great days of the Lord when the Kingdom of God breaks through into

this world order with new increments of wisdom, love and power.

Within the past few months we have seen the two mightiest and wealthiest nations on earth, in the hour of victory and of their greatest power, voluntarily agreeing to disarm, and inviting the lesser nations to a place with them in the councils of peace and world progress. Yes, we have seen a new thing under the sun, and if we Christians in these English speaking nations will rise to the opportunities of the hour and take advantage of the better spirit now prevailing for a great campaign of world Evangelism, the Kingdom of God will suddenly break through into our world history in a way and on a scale never before dreamed of. At this hour as not before in nineteen hundred years, the Christ is standing in our midst and crying, "The time is fulfilled, the Kingdom of God is at hand, Repent ye and believe the good news."

We naturally judge of the future by the past, and forget that God is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all we can ask or even think. Science herself might teach us that as the last fifty years have seen more and greater changes than the previous five hundred so the next fifty years may see more and greater changes than the last five thousand years.

The question has sometimes been asked, Is there any room to-day for the Apocalyptic hope? Men tell us that Jesus shared the pious hope and used the language of His time, but that

our hope for the future is in the progress of science and the slow perfecting of the social order. Perhaps it is not too much to say that while the hope of many before the war was based on a vague faith in some kind of natural and inevitable progress of the race, that hope has now made ashamed. Germany had the most advanced methods of education; Germany had scholarship, music, art, scientific knowledge, technical efficiency, administrative genius, perfection of organisation—and yet all these elements of progress possessed in pre-eminent degree only served to make Germany the more effective in ruining herself, wrecking civilisation and generally creating hell in Europe.

When we honestly look into our own hearts and face the world situation, is there *any* hope to-day apart from the Apocalyptic—the hope of Divine grace and power inter-penetrating our human lives and our human history?

Do we find human nature in ourselves or others any less selfish than in New Testament times? With all the power man is acquiring over nature, apart from Jesus Christ, is He not as much the slave of sin as ever? Not only are the weapons in the hands of wickedness more deadly to-day than ever, but upon all there is a greater moral strain. We have, I believe, men of stronger character than ever before, but our more complex civilisation subjects men to severer tests than in the simpler days of yore. The awful demands of war-time have revealed in a wondrous way the capacity

of men and women for self-sacrifice and heroic devotion to a great cause, but on the other hand they have called forth the meanest kinds of selfishness and multiplied the number of those who fatten upon the life blood of their fellows. Workmen clamour, and rightly so, for a larger share of the wealth they produce, and some of these days they are going to get it. But it is no Kingdom of Heaven they seek, and no brotherhood of men, for they are just as eager to shut out the foreigner from any share of their good things as the manufacturers are to shut off competition and swell profits for themselves. God help all classes and all nations, for we are all alike selfish until the love of Christ touches our hearts.

So far from the Apocalyptic hope having no meaning for our time, it alone remains. Our one hope for individuals and for society is in regeneration, in unprecedented puttings forth of God's power, mightier in-workings of His Holy Spirit, new passions gendered by new visions of the Crucified upon the throne of His glory.

In these days when it seems to be so easily taken for granted that the machinery of nature constitutes the sum total of the universe, we Christians need to speak out, to say what is in our hearts and to say it with no bated breath. We believe in "a God who has not abdicated in favour of the machinery He has created, or forever restricted His creative energy to the methods of the past."

We are men of hope, because we believe in

prayer and miracle, and look for unprecedented manifestations of the divine love and power. To quote Professor John Owen, "The essence of the Apocalyptic hope is the conviction that the true divine order is ever ready to break into the world, if men will only suffer it to break into their hearts."

In conclusion, let us not fail to note that the outlook of Jesus and of the whole New Testament is always and everywhere Apocalyptic in the noblest sense. The goal is not some bettered state of human society on earth, some socialistic commonwealth to which the race will come at long last, but a transcendent life beyond the limitations of time and sense, when we gaze upon the unveiled face of the Son of God and are like Him in the glory.

This earth history with its sin and suffering, the slow moving evolution to better things marked by tears and blood at every stage, finds its justification, not in some perfected social order yet to be and in which only those living on earth at that time can share, but in the making of moral character. God cares not for institutions or civilisations or social orders but for persons. His purpose is to bring many sons unto glory and to have them conformed to the image of that Captain of their salvation who was Himself made perfect through suffering. The seeming indifference and cruelty of nature, the hardness of the earthly lot, the imperfect social conditions, the unmerited suf-

ferings, the ceaseless struggle with evil, furnish the needed earthly probation for immortal spirits and make possible a glory beyond that of nature—the glory of realised holiness. No philosophy of history is adequate which does not discover the real significance of the earthly life to lie in the perfecting of human personality, the making and testing of moral character, the purgatorial and disciplinary training of individual souls for a transcendent life beyond the grave.

"And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, These which are arrayed in the white robes, who are they and whence came they?

"And I say unto Him, My Lord, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which come out of the great tribulation, and they washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

"Therefore are they before the throne of God; and they serve Him day and night in His temple: and He that sitteth on the throne shall spread his tabernacle over them." (Revelation 7:14-15).

Chapter XII

THE TEACHING OF JESUS IN THE FOURTH GOSPEL

This chapter is really an appendix. Our aim has been to study the teachings of Jesus in the light of those Jewish Apocalyptic writings which so largely furnished the language and imagery of national hope and religious aspiration in the time of our Lord, and thus to discover what He really taught with reference to His future coming and Kingdom. As the distinctively Apocalyptic element in the teachings of Jesus is found in the Synoptic Gospels, apart from incidental references we have restricted ourselves to these Gospels. But it may be well in a closing chapter (for one who is frankly conservative in his views and believes in the Johannine Authorship of the fourth Gospel) to indicate the relationship of what seems to be a different type of teaching and a different outlook on the future to the words of the Lord Jesus in the first three gospels.

It is impossible here, and quite outside the purpose of the present writing, to discuss the many different questions which arise in trying to fix the date and authorship of the fourth Gospel, but this much may be said: After giving due considera-

tion to the results of modern research it is doubtful whether any other theory so well meets all the facts of the case as the traditional belief that the Gospel was written about the end of the first century, and that it comes to us from the Apostle John or from the little group of disciples who had gathered about him at Ephesus during the closing years of his life and who committed to writing the memoirs of the Apostle and his final presentation of the teachings of Jesus.

No doubt it is sometimes difficult to know when John is giving the words of Jesus and when he is giving his own matured interpretation of these words, but everywhere one is conscious that not the Church of the second century but the word and testimony of Jesus are the creative source of this book which is the crown and consummation of the New Testament revelation.

One of the problems in connection with the Johannine Authorship of the fourth gospel is that we have another book known as the Revelation or Apocalypse of St. John—a book essentially different in outlook, notwithstanding much that is common in thought and language.

Perhaps no book has been so completely misunderstood and so frequently perverted to unworthy ends. The wildest millenarian theories ancient and modern have been founded upon this book and the name of those who have been deceived and led astray thereby is legion.

To understand the meaning and purpose of this

book we must remember that John was a Jew speaking to Orientals who, to an extent we prosaic Westerners scarcely understand, love gorgeous imagery and speak and even think in symbols; that John was definitely using the vocabulary of Jewish Apocalyptic literature—Angels, Demons, Devil, Beast, Bottomless Pit, Lake of Fire—a literature with which many of his readers were familiar; that persecuting powers and persons of that time, whom it would have been unwise and unsafe to name, are presented in symbols or referred to in cryptic numbers; that the book has an immediate practical aim, viz., to cheer and sustain the persecuted Christians to whom the message is sent.

It is surely evident that the seer of these visions and the writer of this book had no thought that his language would be construed as a literal, matter of fact description of what would take place in a more immediate or more distant future.

Under an imagery that frequently seems to us confused and strangely fantastic, John was telling the persecuted Christians of his time, in a language they could understand, that notwithstanding the persecuting power of Rome and the determination of mighty Emperors to crush out Christianity, Christ and His Saints would rule the world. While there would be no final subjugation of the evil one, no final victory over everything that defileth and maketh a lie, no final relief from sickness and pain and death until after the

consummation of all things, when the first heaven and the first earth had passed away and the New Jerusalem had come down from God, yet was there a day coming and coming speedily when, figuratively speaking, the devil would be chained and the saints reign with Christ upon the earth. The earthly triumph is pictured in Chapters XIX and XX. Then after the judgment of the great white throne the final blessedness of the redeemed in the eternal state is pictured in Chapters XXI and XXII.

Sometimes even in our own day we feel that we are fighting a losing battle against the powers of evil. How much more did this seem to be the case in John's day. But he said, "No, I have seen Him whose vesture is dyed in blood, the faithful and the true One, sitting upon a white horse, and followed by the armies of heaven. With Him upon our side we can not fail, for His name is Lord of Lords and King of Kings. The devil is mightier than man, the forces of evil are diabolical in their strength and cunning, but all the Angels of heaven are on our side, all unseen powers are at the disposal of that enthroned Lord whom we serve, and in face of all odds Christianity is to win the day and the Name of Jesus be above every name ere the last chapter of human history is written."

While it is evident that John, in the vividness of the visions that came to him and in the intensity of his gaze into the future, foreshortened the time

and looked for the speedy triumph of the glorified Lord and His saints, his visions did include some adequate picture of what would result from the witness bearing of the disciples of Jesus among the nations:—

"After these things I saw, and behold, a great multitude, which no man could number, out of every nation, and of all tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, arrayed in white robes, and palms in their hands;

"And they cry with a great voice, saying, Salvation unto our God which sitteth on the throne, and unto the Lamb.

"And all the angels were standing round about the throne, and about the elders and the four living creatures; and they fell before the throne on their faces and worshipped God.

"Saying, Amen: Blessing and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen.

"And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, These which are arrayed in white robes, who are they, and whence came they?

"And I say unto Him, My Lord, thou knowest. And He said to me, These are they which come out of the great tribulation, and they washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

"Therefore are they before the throne of God; and they serve Him day and night in His temple;

and he that sitteth on the throne shall spread his tabernacle over them.

"They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun strike upon them, nor any heat:

"For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall be their shepherd, and shall guide them unto fountains of waters of life: and God shall wipe away every tear from their eyes." (Revelation 7:9-17.)

Those who are to enjoy this felicity are not merely the elect remnant from the twelve tribes of Israel described in the earlier part of the chapter, but a great multitude whom no man can number, out of all nations and kindreds and peoples and tongues.

The Apocalypse of St. John did for the Christians of that generation what the book of Daniel had done for the persecuted saints of Israel centuries earlier—assured them that no matter how many or how persistent were the onslaughts of the ferocious monsters who sought to destroy them, the kingdom and the dominion and the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven would be given to the saints of the Most High whose Kingdom is an everlasting Kingdom and whom all dominions shall yet serve and obey. In all ages the certainty and completeness of Christ's triumph and the endless glory of His Kingdom have been for the saints an incentive to faithfulness in the midst of tribulation, and Chris-

tians have always turned with new eagerness to the Apocalypse of St. John in those cataclysmic hours of human history, such as we have recently passed through, when there is some new and threatening outbreak of the anti-Christian forces.

But if we may accept the tradition of the early Church this was not the last message from the Apostle John. Some years later, when there had come relief from persecution, and ere the last surviving Apostle passed from earth, he gave to the Church in permanent form his final presentation of the life and teachings of Jesus, the crown of all our New Testament literature, the last word about Jesus from an eye witness of the Incarnation, *our fourth gospel.*

The human personality of Jesus in all its simplicity and beauty had been faithfully depicted in the first three gospels, which now for some time had taken their final literary form and were in circulation among the churches of John's later years.

In them the Galilean ministry of Jesus was adequately and faithfully depicted. In them His miracles, His parables, His teachings concerning the Kingdom—its nature, growth, and final manifestation in the new era—were adequately recorded, even as through decades of oral teaching they had become familiar to the whole Church.

The Spirit had brought to the remembrance of Christ's Disciples the things which He had taught, and had led them into that truth which the early

Church most needed for its cheer and sustenance. The Spirit had enabled them to appropriate the things of Christ most essential to the life of the Church in that first generation. It was the time of the first conflict with the Jewish and heathen world, the time of the birth-throes of the Christian Church, when, if the disciples were not to faint and fail, the eye must be fixed upon the goal—upon the objective Coming and Kingdom of their ascended and glorified Lord.

But the Spirit had not yet brought to their remembrance *all* things spoken by the Lord while He was with them. They had not yet been led into *all* the truth of Christ's teaching, nor had the Holy Spirit yet taken *all* the things of Christ and revealed them unto the Church.

In the words of Sir William Ramsay, "When Christ spake to the inner circle of disciples after the manner of John XIV-XVII, he knew they could not then take in the significance of His words, but growingly they would, and the Church of later ages would, as these first Disciples never would.

"The vast sweep of thought and the wide outlook over the world, and the penetrating insight into the nature of man and his relation to God were in the words of Jesus from the beginning, but the disciples must grow in power and thought, in width and depth of experience, ere they can comprehend all that is implied."

When in the closing years of John's life, the

first great struggle was over, and the Church, with widened horizon, began to settle down to her age-long task, it was borne in upon the disciple who had reclined upon Jesus' bosom, that much of Christ's deepest teaching concerning Himself, His relation to the Father and to His believing people—much of the truth most needed by the Church in the fulfilment of her great commission, had not yet found adequate expression in any written or permanent form. He therefore yielded to the request of those about him, and, ere he passed from earth, had them commit to writing the things which he himself had heard, upon which he had pondered all his days, and whose meaning had been ever more fully disclosed to him by the spirit of Christ as his experience of life and of the Church's need widened and deepened.

Through personal fellowship with Jesus when on earth in bodily form, and through that fellowship continued in faith and love and the power of the indwelling Spirit ever since, John had risen to a peace and joy the world could not give and could not take away. In fellowship with Jesus Incarnate, risen, glorified, he had entered upon a life already beyond the power of death and the grave, a life already containing within it the germ of all that could ever come to the redeemed in the consummated Kingdom of God.

Out of his own personal experience John writes this Gospel to show that fellowship with Christ here and now through faith and love and the in-

dwelling of His Spirit is the one thing needful inasmuch as it gives to believers the present experience of the life eternal.

In harmony with the picture of the Apocalypse and with the other New Testament writers this Gospel presents Jesus as the appointed judge of all mankind and looks forward to a day of resurrection and final judgment when believers, beholding the triumphant Son of God, shall share with Him the life of resurrection glory.

"For as the Father hath life in Himself, even so gave He to the Son also to have life in Himself:

"And He gave him authority to execute judgment, because He is the Son of Man.

"Marvel not at this: for the hour cometh, in which all that are in the tombs shall hear His voice,

"And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done ill, unto the resurrection of judgment." (John 5:26-29.)

"And this is the will of Him that sent me, that of all that which He hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day.

"For this is the will of my Father, that every one that beholdeth the Son, and believeth on him, should have eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day." (John 6:39-40.)

But it may fairly be said that the general aim of the fourth Gospel is not to picture Jesus in the imagery of Apocalypse with reference to a

coming Kingdom, but to set Him forth as the Word of God made flesh, Himself the source and centre of all the life and influence which make the Kingdom of God possible among men.

In both the Gospel and the Epistles, John lays special stress upon the teachings of Jesus concerning the life eternal which comes to men *here* and *now* through personal relationship with Himself. There is reference to the Kingdom of God as in the Synoptic Gospels, but the emphasis is upon life—Eternal Life. The Kingdom is not so much an objective, external thing or condition into which men enter, but is made up of individual men who have the new life in Christ. True, this same teaching is in the Synoptic Gospels where, even in passages the language of which is furnished by Jewish Apocalypse, Jesus makes all participation in the future Kingdom depend on present relationship with Himself. Any one coming to these Gospels, without a presupposition to be established, and making a careful study of the full range of Christ's teaching therein presented, will agree with Professor Manson that if Jesus chose the Apocalyptic form of expression, he did so because better than any other existing in His time it enabled Him to present a spiritual idea of God's Kingdom and His righteousness. It is also evident from the Synoptic Gospels that Jesus represented the Apocalyptic visions of the Kingdom as already being fulfilled in the new redemptive forces of which He was conscious in Himself, and

in the power from on high which would come upon men through the gift of His Spirit. (See passages like Luke 7:19-23; Luke 17:20-21; Luke 24:44-49; Matthew 28:18-20.) But the fourth Gospel shows how much larger a place this aspect of our Lord's thought had in His teaching, especially in His conversations with individuals and with the twelve, than we might otherwise conclude.

From the prologue we gather that the writer is definitely making appeal to the thinking people of the Greco-Jewish world of his own time by presenting Jesus and His teachings in terms of Jewish wisdom literature and Alexandrian philosophy, rather than of Jewish Apocalypse, though the latter is not wholly excluded.

As the incarnate Logos or Word of God, Jesus' very presence in the world is its judgment and its opportunity of salvation. Men do not need to wait for some future consummation; their attitude toward Jesus is here and now their salvation or their judgment. The fundamental distinction among men is not that of Jew and Gentile, but that brought out by contact with Jesus—men who love the light and men who hate the light. The issue of personal fellowship with Jesus is set forth under various figures in a succession of chapters. In Chapter V, Jesus is presented as the one who hath *Life* in Himself and whom to know is life eternal. In Chapter VI, He is the *Bread* of life; to feed upon Him is to nourish the life that never dies. In Chapter VII, He is the *Water* of life:

those who drink of Him become themselves fountains of life, sources of refreshment. In chapters VIII and IX, He is presented as the *Light* of the world: those who follow Him do not walk in darkness but have the light of life. In chapter X, He is the *Good Shepherd* who lays down His life for the sheep and thereby rescues them from the enemy and is able to bestow upon them the life eternal. Because He is the Life, He is also the *Resurrection,* and this is vividly set forth in chapter XI. All that men can ever hope for at the Last Day and in a resurrection body is just the natural embodiment of the life they now have in Christ, when that life has come to its full fruition.

Dwelling on this aspect of Christ's teaching, John naturally gives large place to those last discourses of Jesus in the inner circle of His disciples, which speak of the gift of the Holy Spirit and the even closer personal relationship that will exist between Jesus and His disciples, when He has ascended to the Father (Chapters XIV-XVII).

It is sometimes said by critics that in the Fourth Gospel the Coming of Christ in the gift of the Holy Spirit takes the place of the parousia or visible appearing of the Son of Man. Such a statement is misleading for John ever has in the background of his mind the Coming of Christ at death and the glorious manifestation at the last day; but after the experience of a century John realises as earlier writers could not realise that during the intervening age what disciples need,

and what the Church needs to fit her for her mission, is to know that Jesus is *not really absent,* that through His Spirit He continues with them in a closer, more effective way than would have been possible had He remained with them in the flesh, or would be possible were He come to them again in a material body, however glorious.

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than those shall he do; because I go unto the Father.

"And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do. that the Father may be glorified in the Son.

"If ye shall ask me anything in my name, that will I do.

"If ye love me, ye will keep my commandments.

"And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter. that He may be with you forever.

"Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive; for it beholdeth him not, neither knoweth him; ye know him; for He abideth with you, and shall be in you.

"I will not leave you desolate: I come unto you." (John 14:12-18.)

"Nevertheless I tell you the truth: It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I go, I will send him unto you.

"And he, when he is come, will convict the world

in respect of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment:

"Of sin, because they believe not in me; of righteousness, because I go to the Father, and ye behold me no more; of judgement, because the prince of this world hath been judged.

"I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now.

"Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he shall guide you into all the truth: for he shall not speak from himself; but what things soever he shall hear, these shall he speak: and he shall declare unto you the things that are to come.

"He shall glorify me: for he shall take of mine, and shall declare it unto you." (John 16:7-14.)

The abiding presence of Christ and the Gift of the Holy Spirit are indeed referred to in the Synoptic Gospels, but John shows that Jesus laid much more stress upon this truth and gave it a much larger place in his teaching than we would gather from the Synoptic Gospels.

While slow to mature John was the deepest, most thoughtful, most spiritual of all the disciples. What a priceless heritage he bequeathed to the Church when in old age he opened the floodgates of memory and gave to the Church those deeper, more mystical teachings of Jesus, which only one who found their truth in his own experience could have remembered or interpreted!

Through His Holy Spirit Jesus is present with all His disciples in a way that would not be pos-

sible if He were restricted to a bodily presence. A universal spiritual religion can never be dependent on the bodily presence of any one person as the disciples were dependent upon Jesus during his ministry. It has been stated that had Jesus remained upon earth until the present day and had journeyed to a new village each day with his ministry of help and healing, he would not yet have visited once all the villages of India. "It is expedient for you that I go away." Only as freed from the limitations of the flesh can Jesus be omnipresent through His indwelling Spirit. To the first group of disciples Jesus said, "As the Father hath sent me even so send I you." And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost."

"As the Father hath dwelt incarnate in my human body, so henceforth my Spirit which now I breathe upon you will dwell incarnate in your bodies, and because of that indwelling Spirit you will represent me as I have represented the Father. Wherever to earth's utmost end and to the last moment of time there is a disciple there will I be, revealing the Father and extending my work of redeeming love among men."

Imagine, if you can, Jesus coming back in visible bodily form, sitting on a throne in Jerusalem and reigning over the world from that centre (as some people teach and fondly hope). What fellowship with Him would be possible under these circumstances for any save a few immediately about his

person in Jerusalem? What spiritual value, what heart value, what character value, would that have for us here in Canada?

One sometimes feels like saying to those Christians who are so occupied with a future spectacular Coming of the Lord that they can speak and think of little else, "Why stand ye gazing up into heaven? He is here now in the power of His Holy Spirit, if only you will believe it and rejoice in it and live and work in the consciousness of it."

We are not left orphans. Our Lord is still with us and in us by His Holy Spirit. That spirit not only brings to our remembrance the words spoken by Jesus when here on earth, but takes of the things of Christ and shows them unto us, makes His person real and present to our hearts, endues us with His power.

Beloved, now are we the Sons of God; now have we the Life Eternal; now have we the indwelling Spirit and abiding presence of our glorified Lord; and though it is not yet made manifest what we shall be when the work of Christ is complete, we know that in the day of His manifestation, when our Lord comes to His final triumph, we shall see Him as He is and be like Him in transcendent glory.

That is the final message of the New Testament on this subject, and is all-sufficient.

THE END

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